



ALIVE IN JESUS CHRIST
MASSIMPACT.US
[ONE WORLD. ONE MISSION.]

IGNITING Dynamic People and Parishes

Pope Francis | *Evangelii Gaudium* [Basis of [Mass Impact Mission](#)]

Dispositions of a Community of Missionary Disciples (#24)

First Step Originating in God's Love. The Church which "goes forth" is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice. An evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first (cf. *1 Jn* 4:19), and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast.

Empathy and Inculturation. An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people's daily lives; it bridges distances, it is willing to abase itself if necessary, and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others. Evangelizers thus take on the "smell of the sheep" and the sheep are willing to hear their voice.

Enduring and Patient Support. An evangelizing community is also supportive, standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be. It is familiar with patient expectation and apostolic endurance. Evangelization consists mostly of patience and disregard for constraints of time.

Fruitful. Faithful to the Lord's gift, it also bears fruit. An evangelizing community is always concerned with fruit, because the Lord wants her to be fruitful. It cares for the grain and does not grow impatient at the weeds.

Magnanimous. It cares for the grain and does not grow impatient at the weeds. The sower, when he sees weeds sprouting among the grain does not grumble or overreact. He or she finds a way to let the word take flesh in a particular situation and bear fruits of new life, however imperfect or incomplete these may appear.

Totality. The disciple is ready to put his or her whole life on the line, even to accepting martyrdom, in bearing witness to Jesus Christ, yet the goal is not to make enemies but to see God's word accepted and its capacity for liberation and renewal revealed.

Joyful Celebration Thematized by Liturgy. Finally an evangelizing community is filled with joy; it knows how to rejoice always. It celebrates every small victory, every step forward in the work of evangelization. Evangelization with joy becomes beauty in the liturgy, as part of our daily concern to spread goodness. The Church evangelizes and is herself evangelized through the beauty of the liturgy, which is both a celebration of the task of evangelization and the source of her renewed self-giving.



Parishes: Reform Ecclesial Structures for Evangelization (#25ff)

Beyond Administration. I hope that all communities will devote the necessary effort to advancing along the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are. "Mere administration" can no longer be enough.[21] Throughout the world, let us be "permanently in a state of mission".[22] #25

Evangelical Spirit. There are ecclesial structures which can hamper efforts at evangelization, yet even good structures are only helpful when there is a life constantly driving, sustaining and assessing them. Without new life and an authentic evangelical spirit, without the Church's "fidelity to her own calling", any new structure will soon prove ineffective. #26

Missionary Impulse. I dream of a "missionary option", that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented.... #27

Real Presence for All / ALL Activities for Evangelization. [I]f the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it continues to be "the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters".[26] This presumes that it really is in contact with the homes and the lives of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of a chosen few. The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration.[27] In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers.[28] #28

Particular Church: Your Special Trust. Each particular Church, as a portion of the Catholic Church under the leadership of its bishop, is likewise called to missionary conversion. It is the primary subject of evangelization,[30] since it is the concrete manifestation of the one Church in one specific place, and in it "the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative".[31] It is the Church incarnate in a certain place, equipped with all the means of salvation bestowed by Christ, but with local features. #30

Playing to Win. Pastoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says: "We have always done it this way". I invite everyone to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in their respective communities. #33



Personal: Towards a Missionary Spirituality (#77ff)

Vision for Parish Culture. I am aware that we need to create spaces where pastoral workers can be helped and healed, “places where faith itself in the crucified and risen Jesus is renewed, where the most profound questions and daily concerns are shared, where deeper discernment about our experiences and life itself is undertaken in the light of the Gospel, for the purpose of directing individual and social decisions towards the good and beautiful”. #77

Not just Job, but Identity. Today we are seeing in many pastoral workers, including consecrated men and women, an inordinate concern for their personal freedom and relaxation, which leads them to see their work as a **mere appendage to their life**, as if it were not part of their very identity. At the same time, the spiritual life comes to be identified with a **few religious exercises** which can offer a certain comfort but which do not encourage encounter with others, engagement with the world or a passion for evangelization. As a result, one can observe in many agents of evangelization, even though they pray, a **heightened individualism**, a crisis of identity and a cooling of fervour. These are three evils which fuel one another. #78

Fear in Skeptical Culture. [M]any pastoral workers, although they pray, develop a sort of inferiority complex which leads them to relativize or conceal their Christian identity and convictions. This produces a vicious circle. They end up being unhappy with who they are and what they do; they do not identify with their mission of evangelization and this weakens their commitment. They end up stifling the joy of mission with a kind of obsession about being like everyone else and possessing what everyone else possesses. Their work of evangelization thus becomes forced, and they devote little energy and very limited time to it. #79

Relativism [Practical Atheism]. Pastoral workers can thus fall into a relativism which, whatever their particular style of spirituality or way of thinking, proves even more dangerous than doctrinal relativism. It has to do with the deepest and inmost decisions that shape their way of life. This practical relativism consists in acting as if God did not exist, making decisions as if the poor did not exist, setting goals as if others did not exist, working as if people who have not received the Gospel did not exist. It is striking that even some who clearly have solid doctrinal and spiritual convictions frequently fall into a lifestyle which leads to an attachment to financial security, or to a desire for power or human glory at all cost, rather than giving their lives to others in mission. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary enthusiasm! #80

Need Best Practices Management / Integrated Strategy per Mission. The problem is not always an excess of activity, but rather activity undertaken badly, without adequate motivation, without a spirituality which would permeate it and make it pleasurable. As a result, work becomes more tiring than necessary, even leading at times to illness. Far from a content and happy tiredness, this is a tense, burdensome, dissatisfying and, in the end, unbearable fatigue. #82

Pastoral Acedia (“spiritual or mental sloth”) caused by:

- 1) **Unrealistic.** Some fall into it because they throw themselves into unrealistic projects and are not satisfied simply to do what they reasonably can.
- 2) **Lack Patience in Maturing Process.** Others, because they lack the patience to allow processes to mature; they want everything to fall from heaven.
- 3) **Vain Dreams of Success.** Others, because they are attached to a few projects or vain dreams of success.



4) **Depersonalize. More Map than Journey (It's about encounter and people).** Others, because they have lost real contact with people and so depersonalize their work that they are more concerned with the road map than with the journey itself.

5) **Obsession with Immediate Results.** Others fall into acedia because they are unable to wait; they want to dominate the rhythm of life. Today's obsession with immediate results makes it hard for pastoral workers to tolerate anything that smacks of disagreement, possible failure, criticism, the cross. #82

Tomb. And so the biggest threat of all gradually takes shape: "the gray pragmatism of the daily life of the Church, in which all appears to proceed normally, while in reality faith is wearing down and degenerating into small-mindedness".^[63] **A tomb psychology thus develops and slowly transforms Christians into mummies in a museum.** Disillusioned with reality, with the Church and with themselves, they experience a constant temptation to cling to a faint melancholy, lacking in hope, which seizes the heart like "the most precious of the devil's potions".^[64] **Called to radiate light and communicate life, in the end they are caught up in things that generate only darkness and inner weariness, and slowly consume all zeal for the apostolate. For all this, I repeat: Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of the joy of evangelization!** #83

Confidence over Defeatism! One of the more serious temptations which stifles boldness and zeal is a defeatism which turns us into querulous and disillusioned pessimists, "sourpusses". Nobody can go off to battle unless he is fully convinced of victory beforehand. If we start without confidence, we have already lost half the battle and we bury our talents. While painfully aware of our own frailties, we have to march on without giving in, keeping in mind what the Lord said to Saint Paul: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). Christian triumph is always a cross, yet a cross which is at the same time a victorious banner borne with aggressive tenderness against the assaults of evil. The evil spirit of defeatism is brother to the temptation to separate, before its time, the wheat from the weeds; it is the fruit of an anxious and self-centered lack of trust. #84

Life in the Desert. In the desert we rediscover the value of what is essential for living; thus in today's world there are innumerable signs, often expressed implicitly or negatively, of the thirst for God, for the ultimate meaning of life. And in the desert people of faith are needed who, by the example of their own lives, point out the way to the Promised Land and keep hope alive".^[67] In these situations we are called to be living sources of water from which others can drink. At times, this becomes a heavy cross, but it was from the cross, from his pierced side, that our Lord gave himself to us as a source of living water. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of hope! #86

Revolution of Tenderness. The Christian ideal will always be a summons to **overcome** suspicion, habitual mistrust, fear of losing our privacy, all the defensive attitudes which today's world imposes on us. Many try to escape from others and take refuge in the **comfort of their privacy** or in a small circle of close friends, renouncing the realism of the social aspect of the Gospel. For just as some people **want a purely spiritual Christ, without flesh and without the cross, they also want their interpersonal relationships provided by sophisticated equipment**, by screens and systems which can be turned on and off on command. Meanwhile, the Gospel tells us constantly to run the **risk of a face-to-face encounter** with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction. **True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving**, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others. **The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution of tenderness.** #88

Summary Personal: Hearts moved by what moves His.

Summary Parish: Holy Communion we receive corresponds to the Holy Community we live.

