

Proclaim'15

building missionary parishes



COMPANION FOR THE JOURNEY

“With Christ joy is constantly born anew... I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark on a new chapter of evangelisation marked with this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church’s journey in years to come.” (*Evangelii Gaudium* 1). These words of Pope Francis are addressed to us all. Through the Proclaim '15 initiative, we are invited to respond generously to the Holy Father’s request to make a new beginning in support of the building of missionary parishes. This ongoing missionary task takes us on an exciting, inspiring and, at times, challenging journey with the Lord. The Proclaim '15 resources provided have been produced as a **companion** to support you in the confident sharing of the joy of the Gospel, in your own way, at your own pace, according to the individual needs of your parish and community.

CHRIST
at the
CENTRE

“...someone who listens and does nothing is like the man who built a house on soil, with no foundations; as soon as the river bore down on it, it collapsed; and what a ruin that house became!” Luke 6: 49

These challenging words speak directly to those seeking to evangelise effectively. The Scriptures teach us again and again that Christ must be the source of all our endeavours if we are to successfully build local missionary communities and parishes. The parish missionary journey is always a movement for and with Christ – from him and to him.

How to use this resource

This resource was produced as a fruit of the **Proclaim '15 National Catholic Evangelisation Conference** in Birmingham on 11 July 2015. It captures key ideas, practical tips and learning taken from workshops that were delivered on the day to enable your local Catholic community to take new steps in service of parish mission. There are eleven packs in total, each offering insights and tips from a particular workshop. You are invited to explore the workshop topics, reflect how these will be beneficial to your parish and then consider the following:

- **Share this information with others in your parish - you are welcome to photocopy all the materials provided here**
- **Say the Proclaim '15 prayer together**
- **Choose one or two of the topics provided as a focus for your parish’s mission**
- **Read and discuss the *Learning from Pope Francis* text provided in each pack**
- **Decide some new steps that you will take locally in response to what you read.**



PRAYER

Your Constant Companion



Food and Fuel for the Journey

Throughout Jesus's public ministry we observe that prayer was central to his life and mission. He frequently withdrew to pray. He taught his disciples how to pray, so that they would not only experience God's love and mercy, but would be fed spiritually for the great work of evangelisation that was being asked of them. Two thousand years on, it is the same for us today. We are also invited to recommit to the life of prayer as food and fuel for our journey with the Lord, and so become missionary disciples. This theme is repeated in all the Proclaim '15 resources.

Start with Prayer

It is no coincidence that Cardinal Vincent Nichols (Westminster) made prioritising prayer a central theme of his keynote address at the Proclaim '15 National Catholic Evangelisation Conference, saying: "To understand our mission then we have to go to the heart of God, the very mystery of the Holy Trinity, the inner life of God. This is spoken of as the Divine '*communio*' – the sharing within the mystery of the persons of God of divine life, love, truth, goodness and beauty. Only from within that inner heart of God does our mission arise. Only from that inner heart of God does our mission find its shape, its purpose, its energy. We are to do something beautiful; something that is of God; something that is for God. So, our mission always starts in our prayer, flows from prayer, from our daily openness to the great mystery of the life of God. It cannot start anywhere else."

Proclaim '15 Conference, 11 July 2015

Pray Before You Do

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) we read: "The Gospel according to St Luke emphasises the action of the Holy Spirit and the meaning of prayer in Christ's ministry. Jesus prays before the decisive moments of his mission: before his Father's witness to him during his Baptism and Transfiguration, and before his own fulfillment of the Father's plan of love by his Passion. He also prays before the decisive moments involving the mission of his apostles: at his election and call of the Twelve, before Peter's confession of him as 'the Christ of God,' and again that the faith of the chief of the Apostles may not fail when tempted. Jesus' prayer before the events of salvation that the Father has asked him to fulfill is a humble and trusting commitment of his human will to the loving will of the Father." (CCC 2600)

Proclaim Prayer

Please join Catholics all over England and Wales in making a humble and trusting commitment to the Lord by saying the Proclaim '15 prayer for the building of missionary parishes:

**Loving Father,
you so loved the world that you sent us
your only Son, that we might believe in
him and have eternal life.**

**May we encounter Jesus Christ anew this
day and live the Good News with joy.**

**Through the power of your Holy Spirit,
help us to "go out to the whole world and
proclaim" our faith with confidence.**

**Give us the courage to witness to the Joy
of the Gospel by our words and actions.**

**Help our parish to become more
welcoming and missionary, so that you
may be known and loved by all people.**

**We make this prayer through Our Lord
Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for
ever and ever, Amen.**

**Our Lady, Star of the New Evangelisation,
Pray for us.**

**Blessed John Henry Newman, Pray for us.
St Thérèse of Lisieux, Pray for us.**

**Be persevering in your prayers
and be thankful as you stay
awake and pray.**

Colossians 4:2

KEYS TO BECOMING A MISSIONARY PARISH



Key CALLED AND CHOSEN



Remember that God has called and chosen you to share the Good News of the Gospel. He is inviting you every day to be renewed through a personal encounter with his Son, Jesus Christ.



Key ALWAYS PRAY

Prayer should underpin the start, middle and end points of your missionary efforts. Prayer will sustain you throughout your journey.



Key GOD IS PRESENT

Your journey to becoming a missionary parish is not a search for Jesus; you are being called to walk alongside him. He is already here. Everywhere. All the time. He is your constant companion.



Key SHARE THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel is the Word of the Lord. Be mindful of, and respect it, at all times. Read the Gospel, reflect upon it and be confident in sharing it joyfully with others.



Key INVITE OTHERS ON THE JOURNEY

Be open to everyone and invite them to join you on the journey of faith in a welcoming, friendly and non-judgemental way. Create opportunities for people to engage in ways that are appropriate to them and their needs.



Key LOVE IN ACTION

A loving action always bears fruit. God acts through you in every act of kindness great or small. Remember to live the message openly by being joyful when you help others.



Key SIMPLE ACTS DONE WELL

St Thérèse of Lisieux reminds us there is great evangelising power in simplicity. Avoid over complicating things and focus instead on doing simple things in the best possible way.



Key COMMUNICATION

Think about how the world is communicating today. If needed, enlist the help of those with "know how" to embrace and make the most of new media (e.g. website, Facebook, Twitter).

EVANGELISING YOUNG PEOPLE

Learning from Pope Francis

“To know God is strength. To know God, to grow close to Jesus is hope and strength... And that’s what we need of the young people today. Youth with hope and youth with strength. We don’t want weakling youth, young people who are ‘this far, no more,’ neither yes nor no. We don’t want youth who tire easily and who live tired, with a face of boredom. We want strong young people, young people with hope and with strength. Why? Because they know Jesus; because they know God. Because they have a free heart. Free heart. Repeat it. Solidarity. Work. Hope. Strength. Know Jesus. Know God, my strength. Does a young person who lives like this have a face of boredom? Does he have a sad heart? This is the path.”

Pope Francis, Apostolic Visit to Paraguay, Address to young people, 12 July 2015



Tip

VALUE AND CELEBRATE

Your young people are a gift and a source of joy to your parish. Identify moments each year when you can affirm and celebrate their presence and the contribution that they make.



Tip

LOCATE AND INVOLVE

Find out where young people congregate in your local area. Meet with local youth workers and leaders to explore their interests and needs. Consider how your parish might get involved in existing initiatives.



Tip

ROLE MODELS

Identify members of your parish who can serve as role models to young people. Explain the role to them and what is expected. Invite them to build relationships with some of the young people in your parish as opportunities present themselves.



Tip

WELCOME

Start a youth welcome team made up of already practising young people and adults. Their job will be to say hello, establish contact with other young people and to remember them by name.



Tip

AVOID MAKING ASSUMPTIONS

Allow young people to surprise you by their own wisdom and spirituality. Avoid making assumptions about what interests them, recognising that everyone’s journey of faith is unique.

EVANGELISING YOUNG PEOPLE



Tip

INVITATION AND PRAYER

At the right moment, invite young people to make a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and his Church, rather than just to attend Mass. Spend time teaching young people how to pray in different ways.



Tip

RESPONSIBILITY

Invite the young people in your parish to accept a job or service role that fits their character and skills. Being personally invested in a church activity will encourage participation and involvement in the life of the parish.



Tip

EXPERIENCES

Support a young person to attend World Youth Day, or a pilgrimage to Walsingham, Cardigan or Lourdes, to strengthen their sense of Catholic identity and practice.



Tip

COMMUNICATIONS

Use the tools of communication that young people use to communicate with them. Set up parish Facebook and Twitter accounts and invite your young people to populate them (with supervision).

Learning from Pope Francis

“Let us spare no effort in the formation of our young people! Saint Paul uses an expression that he embodied in his own life, when he addressed the Christian community: ‘My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you’(Galations 4:19). Let us embody this

also in our own ministry! To help our young people to discover the courage and joy of faith, the joy of being loved personally by God, is very difficult. But when young people understand it, when young people experience it through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, this ‘being personally loved by God’ accompanies them for the rest of their lives. They rediscover the joy that God gave his Son Jesus for our salvation. Let us form them in mission, to go out, to go forth, to be itinerants who communicate the faith. Jesus did this with his own disciples: he did not keep them under his wing like a hen with her chicks. He sent them out! We cannot keep ourselves shut up in parishes, in our communities, in our parish or diocesan institutions, when so many people are waiting for the Gospel! To go out as ones sent. It is not enough simply to open the door in welcome because they come, but we must go out through that door to seek and meet the people! Let us urge our young people to go forth. Of course, they will make mistakes, but let us not be afraid! The Apostles made mistakes before us. Let us urge them to go forth. Let us think resolutely about pastoral needs, beginning on the outskirts, with those who are farthest away, with those who do not usually go to church. They are the VIPs who are invited. Go and search for them at the crossroads.”

Pope Francis, Apostolic Visit to Rio de Janeiro, Homily, Cathedral of San Sebastian, 27 July 2013