

Saints *Alive!*

The Quarterly Newsletter of Emmaus Journey

SPRING
2006

Our witness is weak or strong, profound or anemic, in proportion to our personal knowledge of Jesus.

Come and See—Go and Tell!

By Rich Cleveland

At a recent conference, Archbishop Timothy Dolan pointed out that Jesus' first words to his disciples were an invitation to, "Come and see," whereas his last words were a commission to, "Go and tell." These two statements capture the essence of evangelization and perhaps identify why our evangelization efforts are often so anemic. Within them there exists a cause and effect relationship that is profound, a relationship that we see at once in the witness of the Apostle John: *"That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."*¹

The most powerful form of witness is one that is at once both personal and definitive, experience validated by truth. As Pope Benedict XVI explains, "anyone who wishes to give love must also receive love as a gift. Certainly, as the Lord tells us, one can become a source from which rivers of living water flow. Yet to become such a source, one must constantly drink anew from the original source, which is Jesus Christ."²

These disciples had been followers of John the Baptist and by reasonable deduction they were seekers after God and seekers after righteousness. I think Jesus recognized within them this longing for God when he asked them, "What do you seek?"

At first glance their response seems rather confused and inept, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" They undoubtedly were not interested in his lodging arrangements, but rather in how they might have access to him and the truth he might proclaim. Jesus gave them access by responding, "Come and see."

"Come and see"; *exercise your faith by following after me, and allow your eyes to be opened and enlightened so that you can*

know who I am, and what I offer. Jesus extends this same invitation today to those who seek God.

Imagine how deprived the disciples would have been, how deprived the world would have been, if these disciples had made some excuse as to why they couldn't respond, or only followed Jesus half-way, or did not continue to dwell in his presence during the subsequent two to three years of his life and ministry. But they didn't pass up the opportunity, instead they not only followed him home that day, but also made themselves available to live and walk with him throughout the region as he taught and healed during the subsequent months. A lot of what he said and did they were unable to understand at the time but because they soaked in his presence the Holy Spirit later brought these things to their remembrance (John 14:26) and guided them into the truth (John 16:13).

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, provides an excellent illustration of what this "Come and see" should mean for us: "This is traveling together with Christ the living Word, who interprets for us the written word, the Bible, and turns that into the path, the path along which our heart starts to burn and thus our eyes are finally opened: Scripture, the true tree of knowledge, opens our eyes for us if at the same time we are eating of Christ, the tree of life. Then we become truly able to see, and then we are truly alive."³

This kind of a living relationship with Jesus provides the motivation and effectiveness to "Go and tell." We see this illustrated in the lives of Peter and John. As the religious leaders persecuted the disciples for testifying that salvation is available only in Jesus, they "saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they wondered; and they recognized that

continued on back page

Inside this Issue

- St. Bernard:
A Poured-Out Life
- Paul Young:
Encountering Jesus
- A Fitting Response
- Scripture Formation
Resource: Catholic Topical
Memory System

Emmaus Journey Mission Statement

Emmaus Journey is a Catholic evangelization and discipleship ministry that is conducted primarily in and through Catholic parishes. Emmaus Journey has embraced Goal 1 of *Go and Make Disciples: A Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States*, produced by The National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "To bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for their faith that, in living their faith in Jesus, they freely share it with others."

Emmaus Journey's Goals are:

- To help enable non-practicing Catholics, occasional Catholics, and nominal Catholics experience conversion to Christ, transformation in Christ, and mobilization for Christ as Catholic disciples.
- To encourage Catholics to embrace Jesus' call to advance the Gospel and his Kingdom by becoming laborers who live and disciple others from among the nonreligious.
- To help mature and gifted Catholics discover a particular call to participate more fully in the task of evangelization.
- To indirectly serve Catholic parishes' evangelization efforts through small-group materials, evangelization and discipleship resources, seminars, ministry events, and messages that move them forward in their efforts to make Christ known, and to nurture mature Catholic disciples who can help others experience conversion, transformation, and mobilization for Christ.



Saints Alive! is published by Emmaus Journey, a national Catholic evangelization and discipleship ministry of The Navigators. Copyright © 2005 Emmaus Journey. Please feel free to get in touch with us:
Emmaus Journey
P.O. Box 63587
Colorado Springs,
CO 80962-3587
(719) 599-0448
info@emmausjourney.org
www.emmausjourney.org

Multiple copies of *Saints Alive!* are available upon request.

From the Heart

By Rich Cleveland

A Fitting Response

Having just experienced the Easter Season, we are reminded that the stone has been rolled away, the work of salvation finished! Now it is time to receive marching orders; now is the time for us to assume the mission. In Jesus' final days on earth after the resurrection, he empowered the disciples for mission; the Holy Spirit was given, the Word revealed, and the disciples were imbued with miraculous power. Why? So that they might go forth into the world with the message of salvation even as Jesus went forth into the world. "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (John 20:21).

The story is told of an imaginary conversation that took place between St. Michael and Jesus after his ascension into heaven. St. Michael asked, "Jesus, now that you have returned to heaven what are your plans for reaching the world with the Good News?" Jesus replied, "I've given the task to my disciples." St. Michael, knowing that the disciples were "unlearned and ignorant" people, asked, "What is your back-up plan if they fail?" Jesus replied, "I have no back-up plan!"

And so it is; Jesus fully entrusted the task of world evangelization to us, his Church. When Jesus appeared to the Church he gave them peace, he gave them purpose, and he gave them power—and he gave them a mission. We believe and each year joyfully celebrate that we, too, were there at the cross, fully included in the saving work of Christ. It is essential that we understand that we were also there, fully included in the great commission which Christ gave to his followers. If we profess our inclusion in the cross and deny our inclusion in the commission, we deceive ourselves. A genuine experience of the saving work of Christ propels believers to joyfully participate in the mission of Christ. Salvation is the cause that brings about the desire to share the Good News. If there is no urgency or willingness to participate in the mission we must question whether we have fully experienced and understood the gift of salvation. In Pope Paul VI's words, "It is unthinkable that a person should accept the Word and give himself to the kingdom without becoming a person who bears witness to it and proclaims it in his turn" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 24).

A genuine experience of the saving work of Christ propels believers to joyfully participate in the mission of Christ.

Thomas gives us some great insight into the chemistry of believing. He did not say, "I cannot believe," but rather, "I **will** not believe" (John 20:25). Thomas had more personal evidence than we do but for a while he willed to not believe. Consequently, Jesus sought out Thomas, offered evidence of his resurrection, and invited him to conversion; "Do not be faithless but **believe**." And Thomas did believe.

In like manner, Jesus commissions us to go forth into our world to offer non-believers the opportunity to believe and experience conversion. Our *world* of mission consists of those who are around us in our natural spheres of influence; those we live around, work and socialize with, our extended family. These are the ones who should not only see the life of Christ demonstrated in us, but also hear from our lips the gentle invitation to "do not be faithless but believe."

The responsibility is ours; we cannot and should not attempt to shirk it. "To the question, 'Why mission?' we reply with the Church's faith and experience that true liberation consists in opening oneself to the love of Christ. In him, and only in him, are we set free from all alienation and doubt, from slavery to the power of sin and death. . . . *Mission is an issue of faith*, an accurate indicator of our faith in Christ and his love for us.

"Those who are incorporated in the Catholic Church ought to sense their privilege and for that very reason their greater obligation of *bearing witness to the faith and to the Christian life* as a service to their brothers and sisters and as a fitting response to God" (*Mission of the Redeemer*, 11).

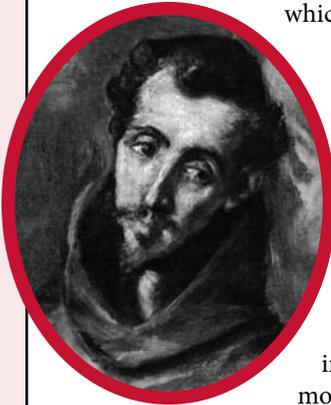


Saints: The Extraordinary Lives of Ordinary People

Saint Bernard: A Poured-Out Life

Bernard of Clairvaux, Saint and Doctor of the Church, had a profound influence on western spirituality due to his piety, knowledge of God, and ability to express truth in numerous theological writings. At an early age, upon the death of his mother, Bernard pursued Christ through a religious life and even “persuaded thirty-one of his friends and relatives (including four of his brothers) to join him”¹ in the monastic life.

St. Bernard was highly respected for his wisdom and learning which resulted in hundreds of treatises, sermons, letters, and beautiful poetry, some of which have been put to music.



“In 1140 Bernard began preaching in public and was soon regarded with awe for the miracles attributed to him and for the eloquence of his preaching, for which he was acclaimed as the greatest preacher of his time.”² His preaching, writings, and piety were known for “inspiring assemblies, galvanizing crowds, and setting armies in motion”³ to reach people for Christ.

We celebrate his life in this issue of *Saints Alive!* because Bernard taught that “there can be an ‘effusion,’ that is, a pouring out upon neighbor only if there is first of all an ‘infusion,’ that is, an intake of divine light into the soul.”⁴ He realized a basic principle of evangelization: “First, fill your soul. Only then can you pour yourself out.”⁵

Consequently, Bernard learned early to invest time getting to know Christ intimately through the Scripture. In one of his sermons he said, “Lord . . . I have always had the sweet habit of grazing under Your watchful eye, and feeding on You in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. Often too, I have rested in the evangelical pastures and writings of the Apostles.” Bernard “soon knew the entire Bible by heart . . . The Bible was imprinted deep in his soul, like an open book, each of whose pages he knew very well.”⁶

Bernard was responsible for many “remarkable conversions of persons engaged in worldly pursuits,”⁷ results which any of us would love to see as well. To what can we attribute his evangelical effectiveness, if not his experience of Christ first hand in prayer, in Scripture, and in Eucharist? We, too, must learn this valuable truth of infusion (come and see) before effusion (go and tell).

1-3 *Dictionary of the Saints*, by John J. Delaney, page 91

4-6 *St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, by Leon Cristiani, pages 46-50

7 *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume II, Online at New Advent

Paul Young: Encountering Jesus

Like St. Bernard, Paul Young was called into the ministry at an early age (18) and for 35 years served very successfully as an evangelical pastor. Eight years ago, God led Paul and his wife, Sandy, who has since died of cancer, to join the Catholic Church where he continues to use his gifts and abilities to serve Christ and his Church.

In his 35 years of ministry, Paul discovered that men need to be approached in unique ways to move them from simply being nominal Church members into being active participants in the Church’s labor force. Paul’s love for Christ and his Church and his enthusiasm for teaching the Scriptures has led him to devote his life to influencing men for Christ.

Paul believes, “These uninformed, uninvolved, and uncommitted men represent an incredible amount of unharnessed horsepower which could be used to advance Christ’s Kingdom. Many of these men have been inoculated with just enough Christianity to keep them from catching the real thing. Imagine what could happen to them, to the Church and to the world if they were able to catch what they have been taught! They are a sleeping giant waiting to be aroused and who once aroused could contribute immensely to spiritual revolution in the world, and enhance the life and ministry of their parishes.”

Consequently, Paul has developed a unique approach to inviting these men to re-consider a life of following Christ. He combines good food, what he calls a “heart attack breakfast,” with some humor and a brief, focused presentation that appeals to men. He likes to quote the recent encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI to explain what these men need and desire: “Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction” (*God is Love*). These breakfasts provide men with the opportunity to encounter Jesus afresh and allow their lives to take on a new decisive direction.

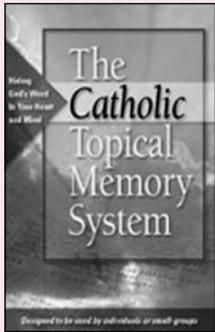
Pray for Paul as he kicks off an Emmaus Journey Men’s Ministry national initiative this fall with an Emmaus Breakfast training DVD, a DVD of twelve mini-talks to be used with men’s groups, and other small-group resources.

Paul has recently remarried, and he and his wife, Diane, reside in Santa Rosa, California, where they are members of Star of the Valley Catholic Church. He can be reached via e-mail at: pauljyoung@mac.com.



Tools You Can Use

New from Emmaus Journey—Scripture Formation Resource



As we have learned, St. Bernard, like many saints of the Church, discovered the importance of having the Bible “imprinted deep in his soul, like an open book.” Consequently, he made it a point to know the Scriptures so well that “he soon knew the entire Bible by heart” and could cite numerous passages.

In *Catechesis in Our Time* the late Pope John Paul II also recognizes and challenges us to re-grasp the importance of memorization; “In the beginnings of Christian catechesis, which coincided with a civilization that was mainly oral, recourse was had very

freely to memorization. Catechesis has since then known a long tradition of learning the principal truths by memorizing. A certain memorization of the words of Jesus, of important Bible passages, of the Ten Commandments, of the formulas of profession of the faith, of the liturgical texts, of the essential prayers, of key doctrinal ideas . . . is a real need, as the Synod Fathers forcefully recalled.”

In response to this need, Emmaus Journey has developed *Hiding God’s Word in Your Heart and Mind: The Catholic Topical Memory System*. This new small-group resource enables Catholics to become strong in their knowledge of the Scripture by combining Bible study discussion on thirty-five important topics of spiritual formation with an effective plan for Scripture memorization. Each book comes with 35 perforated verse cards and a handsome verse card holder.

Introductory Offer: *Hiding God’s Word in Your Heart and Mind: The Catholic Topical Memory System*, which sells for \$14.99 is being introduced for only \$9.75 online at www.emmausjourney.org.

Discussion/Memory Topics in *The Catholic Topical Memory System*

- **Series A:** *Live the New Life*
- **Series B:** *Proclaim Christ*
- **Series C:** *Rely on God’s Resources*
- **Series D:** *Be Christ’s Disciple*
- **Series E:** *Grow in Christlikeness*

Here is what others have said about this resource:

“The Catholic Topical Memory System will have a profound impact on Catholic men (and women) who use this resource.”

—Maurice Blumberg,
Executive Director of National
Fellowship of Catholic Men

“I would say that the habit of memorizing and prayerfully meditating on Scripture that I learned from the Topical Memory System has been, perhaps, the single best investment in my spiritual growth.”

—Tim Kruse,
Executive Director of
The Evangelical Catholic

Come and See—Go and Tell! continued from front page

they had been with Jesus.”⁴ The dynamism of Peter and John’s witness astounded them. This boldness and effectiveness in communicating the Gospel did not rest on Peter and John’s theological education or on their ability to out debate non-believers; it rested upon their having spent a lot of time in Jesus’ presence. Their boldness came from a combination of a deep personal experience with Jesus and allowing the words and life of Jesus to impact them through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

Our witness is weak or strong, profound or anemic, in proportion to our personal knowledge of Jesus. By that I do not mean an individualistic me-and-God-alone relationship, but rather one that is based on a first-hand experience of Jesus, lived in community with fellow disciples. A relationship grounded in sacred Scripture and in prayer. In the words of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, “Three things belong together on this path: the fellowship of the disciples, the Scriptures, and the living presence of Christ.”⁵

Consequently, the first step in creating a dynamic evangelizing community, whether it is a community of two or of hundreds, is to determine to live together daily in Christ’s presence in sacred Scripture—we need to hear it, read it, study it, memorize it, meditate on it, pray over it, and apply it to our lives individually and collectively. When followers of Jesus do this they become interested in those things Jesus is interested in—people and relationships. They naturally, or should I say supernaturally, become sharers of Christ and the Good News and become like the Apostle John saying, “That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” This is something we can do; this is something we must do.

1 1 John 1:3 (italics added)

2 *God is Love*, by Pope Benedict XVI (7)

3 *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith*, by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, page 293

4 Acts 4:13 (italics added)

5 *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith*, by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, page 293