

Saints Alive!

Issue
16

The Quarterly Newsletter of Emmaus Journey

From Whence Comes Passion

By Rich Cleveland

We are invited to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to bring alive in others a passion for Christ and an active concern for the salvation of others.

“We should have a longing and a passion to illumine all peoples with the light of Christ that shines on the face of the Church.... At stake is the eternal salvation of persons.... Missionary zeal has always been a sign of the vitality of our Churches.”¹

These words of Pope Benedict XVI both invite us to action and raise critical questions such as these: From whence comes passion and zeal for the proclamation of Christ and his Kingdom? From whence comes concern for the souls of people?

After Jesus’ crucifixion we see a fearful and timid group of ordinary people—huddled in a room with the windows shuttered in fear of persecution—become courageous witnesses and martyrs who “turned the world upside down for Christ” (Acts 17:6). We see in the lives of people like St. Thérèse of Lisieux, both in her childhood and in her life as a cloistered Carmelite nun, consumed with the love of Christ and devoted to the salvation of souls. From whence came this passion and zeal? How can we reproduce a similar passion in the life of individuals today?

First and foremost, we must agree with Pope Benedict that evangelization—and I would add the preparation of the evangelizers—“is primarily a work of the Holy Spirit.”² The Holy Spirit not only descended on the Church on the day of Pentecost, but he also works in extraordinary ways to inflame and equip us with the Father’s love and give us a concern for the salvation of people’s souls. In reality, this transformation is *entirely* a work of the Holy Spirit. But even as Jesus invited the disciples to cooperate with him in raising Lazarus from the dead by rolling the stone away, so we are invited to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to bring alive in others a passion for Christ and an active concern for the salvation of others.

Somewhere in the lives of most evangelizers is a person who ardently prayed for their

formation in Christ. For the disciples it was Jesus who prayed. We can get a glimpse of his intercession for them in John 17: “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for the ones you have given me.... I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.” Jesus molded the lives of his disciples through his prayers. From the earliest days of their involvement with him, when they asked, “Lord, teach us to pray,” to this final night with them, Jesus shaped their lives through his prayers.

Similarly, for Saint Thérèse of Lisieux it was the ardent prayers of her parents, sisters, and later other spiritual leaders who shaped her heart and mind to follow Jesus. Consequently, she relates how early in her childhood she became a “fisher of souls.”

“I felt a great desire to work for the conversion of sinners, a desire that I had never felt so strongly.”³ This desire never left her and became a hallmark of her life.

I don’t consider myself a great evangelizer; nevertheless, I believe that whatever heart I have for Christ and for people came about largely as a result of the faithful prayers said on my behalf. Immediately after my conversion, I was reminded of a little Jamaican elevator operator whom I saw daily while working in a department store as a teenager. She regularly reminded me, “I’m praying for you.” Gene, the faithful mentor who helped to form me in the faith, not only prayed for me, but also prayed regularly *with* me during the early days of my Christian life. Someone has said that “disciples are made not born,” but perhaps it is more accurate to say that disciples, evangelizers, are both made and born due to the fact that someone is on their knees in prayer for them. For whom are you praying?

Second, a passion for souls comes from time spent with Christ and the Holy Scriptures. When the leaders saw the disciples’ boldness, the accusation leveled against them was that

continued on back page

Inside this Issue

- Saint Thérèse of Lisieux: A Heart Aflame
- Brad Klingele: Speaking About God
- Catholic Small-Group Resources

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.



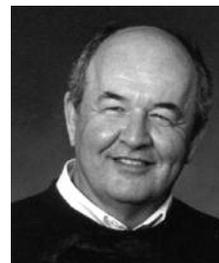
Saints Alive! is published by Emmaus Journey, a national Catholic evangelization and discipleship ministry of The Navigators. Copyright © 2009 Emmaus Journey. Please feel free to get in touch with us:
Emmaus Journey
P.O. Box 63587
Colorado Springs,
CO 80962-3587
(719) 599-0448
info@emmausjourney.org
www.EmmausJourney.org

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

From the Heart

By Rich Cleveland

On 18 October, 2009, the Church celebrates the 83rd World Mission Sunday, which should provide a stimulus for us to refocus on Christ's mission of world evangelization. Pope John Paul II words remind us, "It is necessary, then, to keep a watchful eye on this our world, with its problems and values, its unrest and hopes, its defeats and triumphs.... *This is the field in which the faithful are called to fulfill their mission. Jesus wants them, as he wants all his disciples, to be the 'salt of the earth' and the 'light of the world'*" (cf. Matthew 5:13-14).¹



When God created the world with all its abundance and created humankind to enjoy and dwell in it, he intended that the greatest joy of life would be for *all* of humanity to enjoy a relationship with him. When Adam and Eve spurned that relationship in pursuit of independence, God put in motion a plan to win them back to abundant life with him. Though he specifically chose to pour out his blessings on a man (Abraham) and a people (Israelites), he always had the salvation of the world in mind.

I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth (Isaiah 49:6).

After this I will return, and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up, that the rest of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who has made these things known from of old (Acts 15:16-18).

God has the world on his heart, and he sent forth his Son to redeem the world. As the Father sent him forth so Jesus sent us forth, as a Church and as individuals in that Church, to carry the Good News of him and his redemption to the world. We who profess a love for God *in* our hearts must also have God's love and concern for the salvation of the world *on* our hearts.

In many ways, especially since Vatican II, the Church has sounded forth the resounding message that her primary task and essential mission is that of evangelization. In addition, our leaders, especially the past three popes, have consistently included the laity in the task of evangelization. In the words of Pope Paul VI, "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."² Jesus' message to today's disciples is still, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations."

We who profess a love for God in our hearts must also have God's love and concern for the salvation of the world on our hearts.

However, we must understand that *going* does not only mean going from the place where we are, to the place of another. If that were the case, many of us could offer the excuse, "I cannot go." Rather, to "go and make disciples" means to make the message of Christ and the Good News of his Kingdom present *wherever* we are. It is the concept St. Paul expressed when he said, "Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ. For this I toil, striving with all the energy which he mightily inspires within me" Colossians 1:27-29).

In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, it is being *contagious*: "The Church's mission is to spread hope 'contagiously' among all peoples.... The universal mission should become a fundamental constant in the life of the Church." In other words, we, the members of Christ's Church, should be so infected with the love of Christ that it touches and spreads hope to those we come in contact with, wherever we go.

¹ *The Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People*, by Pope John Paul II, 3

² *On Evangelization in the Modern World*, by Pope Paul VI, 24

Saints: The Extraordinary Lives of Ordinary People

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux: A Heart Aflame

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux was born into a devout Catholic family in 1873. From early on her parents and sisters nurtured her soul by praying for her, talking of God and his ways with her, and teaching her to pray. While still a child she recognized the need to submit her will to God's and cried out in prayer, "I choose all. I don't want to be a half-way saint.... I choose all that you want."¹

She faced disappointment as she was told again and again, at age 15, that she was too young to enter the Carmelite Order as she desired. In spite of the initial opposition, God finally opened the door for her acceptance into the Convent at Lisieux. Although she only lived as a Carmelite nun for nine years—she succumbed to tuberculosis at age 24—those nine years impacted the world and the salvation of many. She was beatified in

1923, canonized in 1925, and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1997 by Pope John Paul II.

She found that reading Holy Scripture and *The Imitation of Christ* was deeply beneficial for her spiritual well-being and growth. She said, "In them I find nourishment that is solid and completely pure. But above all it is the Gospels that keep me fed during my times of prayer. In them I find all that is necessary to my poor little soul."²

Prayer, too, was at the center of all that she did. She used the scientist Archimedes's statement, "Give me a lever, a point to support it, and I will lift the world," as a model to explain how the Saints (and in turn how we) can join in the battle for souls. "The Almighty gave them, as a point of support *Himself*, and Himself alone. As a lever; prayer, which sets ablaze a fire of love, and that's how they lifted the world. That's how all Saints who are still fighting the battle lift it, and that's how until the end of the world the Saints to come will lift it."³ Her life was devoted to Jesus and to prayer, and from that devotion came a heart aflame for the salvation of souls.

We can learn much from Saint Thérèse, Co-Patron of Missions. She shows us the simple way of developing a passion for Christ and for the salvation of people.

Brad Klingele: Speaking About God

"I've never seen anyone talk to people about God as much as you do," a slightly exasperated friend told Brad Klingele. Though it was a compliment, Brad felt a little embarrassed. He was aware of the times when his enthusiasm about God, to some he spoke with, might have been annoying.

Brad, who resides in Madison, Wisconsin, is naturally gregarious with an "impulsive love for conversation and sharing ideas and interests." However, sharing the Gospel is a little more daunting than simply making small talk. "For me, evangelization is an urge that is irrepensible," he explains. "I think of St. Paul's words, 'Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel' as a description not of my fear of failing to evangelize, but the turmoil that I feel when I cannot speak about God in some situation.

"Most of the time I have felt blessed that God puts people in my path whom I can talk with about questions of ultimate meaning, which is another way of getting at the God question. My experience in public school taught me that there are many ways to engage people in conversation about God that are not annoying or threatening, if only we take the time to treat people as people. This necessarily involves listening and figuring out a way to go deeper in our time together. Sharing the Gospel is not some formulaic sharing of ideas, but rather searching for what the Holy Spirit is doing in any given conversation."

For Brad "evangelization doesn't involve being pushy or taking an ideological approach to 'faith' or 'the church' wherein the goal is often to share an idea and somehow invite assent to that idea. Instead, I believe that Jesus calls me to be ready to share something about His presence in any area, be it family life, school, art, literature, science, etc. This often does not involve explicit conversation about Jesus, but rather a movement to see God's invisible hand in all things. This approach is similar to St. Thérèse's. She had this impulse toward seeking God in all things and sharing this love, this impulse, with others."

We learn from Brad that there is more to having a concern for people's souls than just being a good conversationalist. We must genuinely be growing in our love of Christ. And like Christ, we must love people enough to engage them in conversation about the things that truly matter.

Brad Klingele ministers to young adults at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Madison, WI.



¹ The Story of a Soul, by St. Thérèse of Lisieux, translated and edited by Robert J. Edmonson, C.J.

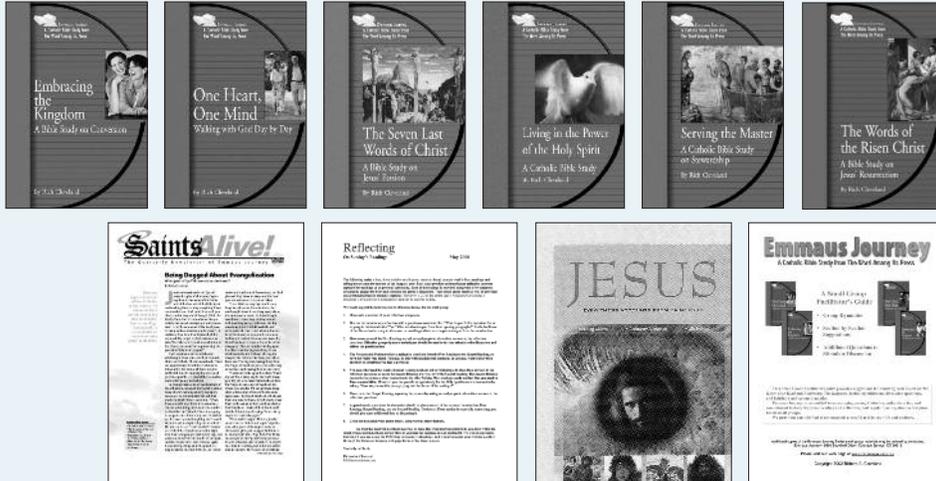
² Ibid, p. 203.

³ Ibid p. 296.

Tools You Can Use

Emmaus Journey—Catholic Small-Group Resources

The vision of *Emmaus Journey* is to help Catholics mature in Christ, to grow in their understanding and commitment to sacred Scripture and Church teachings, and to fan into flame people's commitment to prayer and evangelization.



Emmaus Journey contributes to this goal by helping parish leaders inaugurate small-groups and small Christian communities within their parishes; assisting in the training of small-group facilitators; and providing practical small-group resources.

Emmaus Journey small-group materials integrate Scripture study with meaningful support materials from Church teachings and Catholic leaders, using a practical topical approach. These studies provide an effective addition to existing adult formation resources and are available at a reasonable cost.

In addition *Emmaus Journey* provides effective formation materials and training resources in various multi-media formats.

Decades of ministry experience in evangelization and disciple-making are reflected in these practical training tools. These resources will impact your life and enhance your ministry, and can be found on the Emmaus Journey web page.

Visit www.emmausjourney.org for our latest materials.

From Whence Comes Passion *continued from front page*

they had “been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). After Pentecost, the things Jesus said and did came together and registered with the disciples, and they were reflected both in their boldness and in their understanding. Jesus’ high priestly prayer in John 17 says, “I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from thee.” Consequently, the sacred Words of God, holy Scripture, became forever linked to a person’s growth in godliness (2 Timothy 3:16,17) and power (1 Thessalonians 1:5; 2:13, and Ephesians 6:17).

St. Thérèse’s thoughts and writings were permeated with sacred Scripture. You cannot read her writings without realizing that her heart and mind were saturated with the Bible, especially the words and thoughts of Jesus. But she also was impacted by Old Testament books like the Song of Solomon, which many of us have never read. To her, and to Jesus’ followers, sacred Scripture was not simply a text to be studied; it was first and foremost a relationship with the Savior. As Pope Benedict reminds us: “We too can encounter Christ in reading Sacred Scripture, in prayer, in the liturgical life of the Church. We can touch Christ’s heart and feel him touching ours.”⁴

If we want people to develop Christ’s heart for the world, we must teach them to “understand and take delight in Christ”⁵ by consistently spending time with him by reading sacred Scripture and praying so that he can also *touch* their hearts.

Third, the spirit of evangelization is primarily caught, not

taught. The disciples were accused of being “like Jesus.” They had caught his heart for the Father and his love for the world. Several statements of St. Paul’s bring out this concept of spiritual formation by association: “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1); “What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:9).

The whole concept of disciple-making and faith formation involves a life-on-life impact that is endemic to reproducing “after your own kind.” Was it easy for Jesus to invite twelve men to follow him around and learn from him? Probably not. But the lessons he taught were magnified by the example of his life and the evidence of his character. Who have you invited into your life, to be around you? Who do you take with you when you go to minister to others? Hopefully, the classroom of our lives is not wasted space.

In these ways the Holy Spirit invites us to participate with him in producing passion-filled evangelizers. This is an invitation that is too good to refuse.

1 *Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the 83rd World Mission Sunday 2009*

2 *Ibid*

3 *The Story of a Soul*, by St. Thérèse of Lisieux, translated and edited by Robert J. Edmonson, C.J., p.104.

4 *Saint Paul*, by Pope Benedict XVI, p.25.

5 *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas a Kempis, Book1, chapter 1.