

OUR LADY OF MEDJUGORJE'S MESSAGE OF JANUARY 25, 2006

“Dear children! Also today I call you to be carriers of the Gospel in your families. Do not forget little children, to read Sacred Scripture. Put it in a visible place and witness with your life that you believe and live the Word of God. I am close to you with my love and intercede before my Son for each of you. Thank you for having responded to my call.”

BE CARRIERS OF THE GOSPEL IN YOUR FAMILIES

A. The Call to Be Evangelists.

1. January 25 – the date this Message was given – is the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. Our Lady is right in step with the Church in her message.
 - a. St. Paul's great grace was that he was so open to being converted by Jesus.
 - b. Because of his surrender to Jesus, the Holy Spirit carried him 15,000 miles on a mission of conversion to the Gentiles.
 - c. His writings comprise at least 25% of the New Testament.
2. January 22 – was the third Sunday of Ordinary Time. The Gospel records the beginning of the evangelization by Jesus: “Jesus came to Galilee (a territory where people were open) proclaiming the Gospel of God:
 - a. “This is the time of fulfillment;
 - b. “The Kingdom of God is at hand;
 - c. “Repent (metanoia – change your mind), and
 - d. “Believe the Gospel (God News).”
3. Pope John Paul called for a “New Evangelization” characterized by a self-conversion whereby we first evangelize ourselves by:
 - a. Absorbing the Message of Jesus by listening to Him;
 - b. Placing His words in our heart as a treasure we love;
 - c. Living the love that is in our hearts – the way we preach.
4. The Call of the Apostles. “He appointed Twelve:
 - a. “That they might be with Him (constant companions);
 - b. “That He might send them forth to preach (primarily by witness of example);
 - c. “And to have authority over demons (sources of darkness).” (Mark 3:14)
5. The Call of God the Father at the Transfiguration:
 - a. “This is My Beloved Son;
 - b. “LISTEN to Him.” (Mark 9:7)

B. Basic Attitudes Toward the Word of God.

1. Reverence. “The Word of God is the Son of God, thus all the words God Speaks have a certain resemblance to His Eternal Word.” – St. Thomas Aquinas.
 - a. God's Word contains the Spirit of Christ: a spirit of humility and gentleness, a spirit of self-abnegation and blessedness for others, a spirit of renunciation of the world's values and a desire for the Kingdom of God and His Will.
 - b. God's Word contains the Holy Spirit: a spirit of love, joy, peace and unity.
2. Openness. A person's word contains his thought and his will and it is an attempt to communicate – to make two persons one in thought, desire, will and action. Thus, we should be open and available like Mary: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord.”
3. Cooperation. The Word of God is full of divine power, “alive and active” (Heb 4:12), ready to accomplish what it says and describes. “God said ‘Let there be light’ and there was light.” (Gen. 1:3). God has designs for us but He needs our cooperation. In Wisdom 18:15 the Word is personified as a “fierce warrior bearing the sharp word of God's inexorable decree.” Isaias (9:7) compares it to a bird of prey loosed by a falconer. Jeremias says it is a hammer shattering rock (Jer. 5:14).

C. Five Duties to the Word of God.

St. Thomas Aquinas in his Exposition of the Symbol of the Apostles (Apostles' Creed), Second Article – I Believe in Jesus Christ, mentions five ways that we should receive the Word of God.

1. Listen. “We ought to listen eagerly to the words God speaks to us, because it is a sign that we truly love God.”
2. Faith. “We should believe in the words of God, so that Jesus Christ (the word of God) might dwell in our hearts. Our Lord, finding the Jews not believing in His words said: “The Word of God does not dwell in you (John 5:38).”
3. Reflection. “We should meditate continually on the words of God. It is not sufficient merely to believe; faith without meditation will be of little use. Meditation gives us tremendous power against sin: “My God I have hidden your teachings in my heart, so as not to offend you by sin.” (Ps 1:2) St. Gregory says: ‘Unless the grapes are trodden upon, the wine will not flow.’”
4. Share. “We should communicate the divine words to others, so as 1) to warm them, 2) instruct them, and 3) influence them. As St. Paul says: “Never let evil talk pass your lips; say only the good things men need to hear, things that will really help them.” (Eph 4:29) And also: “May the Word of God dwell in you with plenitude, and fill you with wisdom; instruct and exhort one another. Preach the word, pressing men in season and out of season....”
5. Example. “Finally, we should put the words of God into practice. “Do not deceive yourselves; be not simply hearers of the word, but do what they tell you.” (James 1:22)

D. The Parable of the Sower.

1. This very basic parable concerns the Word of God: “The seed is the Word of God” (Luke 8:12), and it is recorded by each of the synoptic gospels (Mt 13:18-23; Mk 4:13-20; Lk 8:5-15).
2. The parable explains the different obstacles to hearing and retaining the Word of God: There are “those who hear (the Word of God), but as they go in their way they are choked by 1) anxieties, and 2) riches, and 3) the pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.” (Lk 8:14)
 - a. Thus, the heart must first choose God;
 - b. This implies a purification of heart, so that the heart is not divided;
 - c. The heart will then be totally attentive and responsive to God: “But the seed in good soil represents those who bring a good and honest heart to hearing the word (of God).” (Lk 8:15)
3. When the Word of God is compared to a seed, the basic presupposition is that it contains a germ of life and actually produces something: “Such people hold fast to the Word of God and by their perseverance yield a harvest.” (Lk 8:15)

E. Living the Message.

1. Set aside a specific time each day and form a habit – perhaps in the evening when everything is quiet.
2. Select a passage of Scripture either the readings of the day’s liturgy or else those that fulfill a special need.
3. Surrender completely to the Father, request the gift of the Holy Spirit, ask the presence and guidance of Our Blessed Mother, and desire to be united with Jesus and His Word.
4. Read some commentary for background and understanding.
5. Read the Scripture passage slowly to understand each word and phrase. Repeat this a second or third time if need be.
6. Stop at the point that strikes you or attracts you, trying to discover the significance of it, its beauty, the love behind it, etc.
7. See how it applies to different aspects of your life, and decide what you are going to do about it.
8. Place it in your heart and ask God to bless it.