



Basic Evangelization Training

Course 1: The Basics

1.5 Prayer

Prayer

When proclaiming the gospel in words, we must be bold, and at the same time be grounded in the love and mercy we've experienced from the Lord. Evangelization, whether flowing from authentic witness or proclamation, requires grace!

This leads directly to the third point. It is crucial that we include prayer before, during, and after our efforts to evangelize. Ultimately, conversion to Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit. When we do the work of evangelization we participate, and in a sense "step into the stream of grace" already at work in the world. The Holy Spirit has been working in the lives of the people we speak to before we ever speak to them. He knows them more intimately than they know themselves, and loves them with an eternal love. He knows what each person needs to hear, and the kindness (or the challenge) that they so need. We will not be effective unless we allow ourselves to become instruments of the Holy Spirit.

Building on these foundational truths, through our extensive experience doing public evangelization, we found this four-step evangelization model to be helpful:

- 1: Listen. First and foremost, we listen to God in prayer. Then we bring that habit of listening to our evangelization efforts. Attend to others and get to know them. Discover how Christ is already working in them.
- 2: Befriend. Show others that they are valued and loved. That someone cares about them. Find common ground. As the saying goes, "People usually don't care what you know, until they know that you care."
- 3: Proclaim. Share the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ, received through faith, lived out in the Church. Ultimately, the only thing we have to offer the world is Jesus. Everything else is, as St. Paul said, like refuse in comparison to the great good of knowing Jesus Christ.
- 4: Pray and Invite. Pray for the person, out loud, right then and there. Ask them to pray with you too, and to open their hearts to Jesus. Invite them to the next step, whether it be a meeting at the parish, a Bible study, or getting lunch together

As we remember God's goodness and remember that the work of evangelization begins, continues and is completed in God, let's conclude lesson one with close with prayer.

[Mary Healy prays for those going through training for enlightening of the Holy Spirit.]