



## E-BULLETIN #81

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*"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)*

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item 153

### **a new name for our Pallottine charism - 'new evangelization'!**



We are living in a moment of grace. Bl John Paul II of happy memory continually spoke of the need for reviving and renewing the faith, which is both to be believed in one's heart and lived in one's life. Most people today live merely by what appeals to their good sense in their respective sphere of activity. Public life today gives too little evidence of religious convictions or moral principles derived therefrom. They find it difficult to "listen to others speaking of God" (*Lineamenta* on New Evangelization, 19). More than a century ago Soren Kierkegaard pointed out the present condition of Christendom: "Christendom has done away with Christianity, without being quite aware of it. The consequence is that, if anything is to be done, one must try again to introduce Christianity into Christendom" (*Kierkegaard* 1941, 39).

The time of St Vincent Pallotti witnessed revolutions and upheavals – and their consequences such as a decline of faith and love, moral decadence, and an increase of suffering in the life of the people. In this dangerous and difficult situation Pallotti felt the need to do something substantial to restore the image of God in every human person. He realized that reparation is entrusted to every man and woman, to be pursued by using every means available, and aimed at reviving of faith and rekindling of charity. Therefore, he says: "It is indispensable to secure the collaboration of all the members of the Church: clergy, religious and laity, and to unify their efforts in order to promote with greater effectiveness the apostolic mission in the Church" (Preamble b). As a result, the Union of Catholic Apostolate was born in response to the actual needs of the Church and the world. The Union is nothing but -

a communion of those faithful who, inspired by the charism of St Vincent Pallotti, promote the co-responsibility of all the baptized to revive faith and rekindle charity in the Church and in the world, bringing all to unity in Christ (*UAC General Statutes*, 1).

Through the Union of Catholic Apostolate the laity could participate in the mission and play their role in defending the faith. A number of elite dedicated their wealth for the defence and propagation of the faith. They supported the existing institutions and began new ones. Pallotti saw that innumerable good people were ready to offer their time and talent to respond to the needs of the time. These good men and women supported Vincent in actualizing his vision of the revival of faith.

When faced with similar situations, Pope John Paul II also adopted a method similar to that of Pallotti that is the revival of the faith of Catholics, and termed it 'New Evangelization.' During his apostolic visit to Poland in 1979, while delivering a homily at the Sanctuary of the Holy Cross, the Pope used the term: 'New

Evangelization' for the first time in history. Then, in 1983, he explained the expression more clearly in the Bishop's Conference of Latin America. He was not thinking merely of a re-evangelization of the continent, but of a sharing of the faith which was new in its vigour, new in its methods and new in its expressions. Many have tried to interpret the Pope's mind further. They say, for example, that in Europe and North America, New Evangelization should address the reality of a highly secularized society, in Asia the sturdiness of the ancient religions, in Africa that of the native cultures and in Latin America the situation of the growing impoverishment of people due to unjust structures and the consequence of colonialism. The kerygmatic content in New Evangelization is experiential, existential, operative, vital and not purely abstract and theoretical. It centers on a message that has transformed the evangelizing person and community (Cf. *Thoughts on Evangelization* 1997, 80).



The XVII General Assembly of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate took the first step to respond to the call of the Church for New Evangelization. The Assembly declared that "to all a new missionary response appeared to be urgent; a New Evangelization which, starting from a common openness to the Spirit, would lead to internal renewal and succeed in giving voice to the hopes of people as active and decisive subjects of their own faith and of their Christian maturity" (*In the Union to Evangelize* 1992, 15). Declaring this the Assembly re-emphasized the role of Pallottines in the new missionary endeavour of the Church.

For Pallotti the project of New Evangelization (revival of faith and rekindling of charity) was not just another theme in his life, but it was the center of God's will for his life and the goal of his foundations; the real solution for the crisis of his time; the purpose for which all efforts spiritual and temporal were to be directed; the fundamental project that would unite the clergy, religious and laity; and the instrument through which the hope for one flock and one shepherd would be realized. Having seen the impetus of New Evangelization in the charism of St Vincent Pallotti, we are now in a position to spell out some expressions that Pallottines are familiar with in order to respond to the call for a New Evangelization.

**Catholic Apostolate:** Pallotti was convinced of the apostolic character of the entire people of God. Apostolate, therefore, is not restricted to the priestly class alone. Every idea and every suggestion put forward by Pallotti regarding the Catholic Apostolate (Universal Apostolate) is reflected in the Decrees of Vat II that came out 115 years after his death. The *Instrumentum Laboris* on New Evangelization (n. 106) reiterates the participation of various persons (priests, parents, religious and catechists) in evangelization, each exercising a proper task and responsibility. Pallotti asks everyone: "Can you pray for the salvation of men? Then pray. Can you give good example to others? Then show good example. Can you exhort your neighbour to do good? Then exhort him. Can you contribute something to help the missionary activities? This is how you become an apostle" (OO CC IV, 326). Everyone young and old, healthy and sick, prisoners and free, rich and poor can be apostles in their own particular way. Thus you can be an agent of New Evangelization by becoming an apostle yourself.

**The Cenacle Model:** The Pallottine icon of the cenacle is quite capable of responding to the call of the Church today. The little Church gathered in the cenacle is a symbol of an ecclesial vision of communion, where all the faithful feel co-responsible for the mission of the Church and participate in it with equal dignity and right. In this model of the Church, there is no claim for superiority, but all are equal among equals (Gen. Stat. 29a, 31). Today, the churches are caught up in a situation of conflict and struggle within. There are many unevangelical values dominating our churches, for example, power politics, financial ambiguity, growing distance from the poor, excessive

institutionalization, and eagerness for fame and recognition. In this situation, the cenacle model invites every Catholic to become an authentic apostle of Jesus for the transmission of Christian Faith. The presence and action of the Holy Spirit will be the hallmark of this project.

**Love of Christ Urges Us:** St Vincent Pallotti suggested the words of St Paul as a motto for apostolic work: “The love of Christ urges us” (2 Cor 5:14). In order to be urged and motivated by the love of Christ, we need to be rooted in his love. New Evangelization is not possible without motivation by the Spirit of Christ. Pope Francis states that it is the love of Christ that urges the Christians to live their lives in this world with ever greater commitment and intensity (Cf. *Lumen Fidei*, n. 18). According to Pallotti the love of God and Jesus Christ should impel us to do everything and this must be the soul of any apostolic work. Pallotti emphasized this motto because of the emerging tendency among evangelists to seek prestige, honour and reward here on earth. This motto should lead us to the realization that we are only instruments in the hand of God. It is Jesus who goes after the lost one and searches for the stray, leaving the ninety-nine behind.

Thus, we have a paradigm shift in our approach to Evangelization. As Pallottines we are the ‘chosen’ people for this ministry and our charism impels us do it efficiently. It is the right time for us to respond to situations according to the charism of our founder. Let the charism of St Vincent Pallotti be spelt out through the apostolic activities we undertake to the revival of faith and rekindling of charity in the Church and in the world. May our founder St Vincent Pallotti help us in our response to the call of the Project of New Evangelization.

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item 154

### ...a special spiritual moment

A new Shrine dedicated to Mary Queen of the Apostles is a special spiritual moment for all of us at the Pallottine Animation Centre.



I am glad that all liked it and that many members of the UAC family attended the blessing ceremony and the inauguration of the new Novena to Mary, Queen of Apostles. The Local Coordination Council met and decided to change the weekly prayer from Friday to Thursday and this will be a weekly Novena to Mary.

The speciality of the Novena is that it focuses on renewal of faith and love in the hearts of all the faithful. Just like the first apostles in the Cenacle, we seek the powerful intercessory help from Mary, Queen of Apostles for another Pentecost and infilling of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all UAC members and all disciples of Christ. We hope and pray that this Shrine becomes a renewal place inspiring people to visit it frequently. We will begin the new Novena practice from 04 Jul. All are welcome.

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**you commented...**

**on #80**

Fr Jacob...thank you for the beautiful and inspiring article on Brother Carlos and really on all our Brothers (living and deceased). We each have much to contribute to our Church and our Society. Roles are secondary! I pray God blesses us (SAC) with vocations! Only with new members--both priests and brothers--can we continue to foster the Gospel in and through the Pallottine Charism.

Thank you Fr Jacob for all you do to promote the vocation of Pallottine Brother.

**JB 11.08.13**

the last paper in the E-Bulletin on Brothers was especially good

**LR 13.08.13**