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Evangelii Gaudium

Prayer Module 5

‘Principles for Evangelising’



Principles for Evangelising

Prayer Reflection on {Pope Francis' Principles
for Missionary Evangelisation
(Chapter 4)

Wisdom from Evangelii Gaudium

Chapter four is a reflection on the social dimension of evangelisation. In this chapter Francis puts forward the social issues he is most concerned about. One of these issues concerns social division and conflict. He then presents four principles he believes can help in peace building, justice, and fraternity (#220). These principles can well apply to the mission of evangelisation.

(If you are a big group, divide yourselves into 4. Read the scripture below the title before reflecting on the principle).

➤ **First Principle: Time is greater than space**

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3: 1-11 (A time for everything)

A constant tension exists between fullness and limitation. Fullness evokes the desire for complete possession, while limitation is a wall set before us. Broadly speaking, "time" has to do with fullness as an expression of the horizon which constantly opens before us, while each individual moment has to do with limitation as an expression of enclosure" (#222). This principle calls us to:

- 1) Work slowly but surely, without being obsessed with immediate results. It helps us endure difficult and adverse situations, or inevitable changes in our plans (#223)

Final Blessing

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen



i New Revised Standard Version. 1989, Matthew 4: 1-11

ii Some texts were redacted to suit as intercessory prayers

Intercessory Prayersⁱⁱ

(Assign a person to read each prayer)

Lord, most often it is easier to work for easy and quick results rather than take the often long and complicated path of generating processes of people-building (#224). Help us accept and understand that we need to wait for the Holy Spirit if we are to do your will (#225). E te Ariki...

Response: Whakarongo mai ra kia matou

You have made us a Church for everyone (#112) and a Church of many faces (#115). However, there are times that our differences can prove uncomfortable. We call upon the Holy Spirit to open us to the beauty of our diversity and encourage us to aspire to it (#131). E te Ariki...

Response: Whakarongo mai ra kia matou

You call us to reject the various means of masking reality and insist on our lofty ideas that only make sense to us (#222). Remind us that you made your son, Jesus Christ became flesh to be among us, to make your incomprehensible Love, known to us (#223). E te Ariki...

Response: Whakarongo mai ra kia matou

We either fall in love with our small worlds or be beholden to the grandeur of the outside world. May we constantly see the greater good which benefit us all by appreciating who and where we are and see our connection with the rest of humanity (#235). E te Ariki...

Let us say our personal intentions...E te Ariki...

Response: Whakarongo mai ra kia matou

- 2) Pay attention to the bigger picture, openness to suitable processes and concern for the long run. The Lord himself, during his earthly life, often warned his disciples that there were things they could not yet understand and that they would have to await the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 16: 12-13). The parable of the weeds among the wheat (cf. Mt 13: 24-30) graphically illustrates an important aspect of evangelisation: the enemy can intrude upon the kingdom and sow harm, but ultimately he is defeated by the goodness of the wheat (#225)



Reflection: *What aspect of your ministry is calling you to wait patiently for God?*

➤ **Second Principle: Unity prevails over conflict**

Scripture: 1 Corinthians: 12-13 (One body with many parts)

This principle, drawn from the Gospel, reminds us that Christ has made all things one in himself: heaven and earth, God and man, time and eternity, flesh and spirit, person, and society. The sign of this unity and reconciliation of all things in him is peace. Christ “is our peace” (Eph. 2: 14) (#229). This principle calls us to face conflict:

- 1) When conflict arises, some people simply look at it and go their way as if nothing happened; they wash their hands of it and get on with their lives. Others embrace it in such a way that they become prisoners; they lose their bearings, project into institutions their own confusion and dissatisfaction and thus make unity impossible (#226-227).

- 2) ... go beyond the surface of the conflict and see others in their deepest dignity...Solidarity, in its deepest and most challenging sense, thus becomes a way of making history in a life setting where conflicts, tensions and oppositions can achieve a diversified and life-giving unity (#228).
- 3) Have the conviction that the unity brought by the Spirit can harmonize every diversity. It overcomes every conflict by creating a new and promising synthesis. Diversity is a beautiful thing when it can constantly enter into a process of reconciliation and seal a sort of cultural covenant resulting in a “reconciled diversity” (#230).

Reflection: *How does our community deal with conflict? Can we do better?*

➤ **Third principle: Realities are more important than ideas**

Scripture: Mark 2:23-27 (Sabbath made for man)

Realities simply are, whereas ideas are worked out. There has to be continuous dialogue between the two, lest ideas become detached from realities... (#231). Ideas, conceptual elaborations are at the service of communication, understanding, and praxis. What calls us to action are realities illuminated by reason (#232).

Reflection: *Give an example of an idea that hasn't borne fruit in reality?*



➤ **Fourth principle: The whole is greater than the part**

Scripture: Luke 15: 3-7 (The parable of the lost sheep)

To Christians, this principle also evokes the totality or integrity of the Gospel which the Church passes down to us and sends us forth to proclaim...The good news is the joy of the Father who desires that none of his little ones be lost, the joy of the Good Shepherd who finds the lost sheep and brings it back to the flock. The Gospel is the leaven which causes the dough to rise and the city on the hill whose light illumines all peoples. The Gospel has an intrinsic principle of totality: it will always remain good news until it has been proclaimed to all people, until it has healed and strengthened every aspect of humanity, until it has brought all men and women together at table in God's kingdom (#237). This principle calls us to:

- 1) To broaden our horizons and see the greater good which will benefit us all. But this has to be done without evasion or uprooting. We need to sink our roots deeper into the fertile soil and history of our native place, which is a gift of God. We can work on a small scale, in our neighbourhood, but with a larger perspective. Nor do people who wholeheartedly enter into life of a community need to lose their individualism or hide their identity; instead, they receive new impulses to personal growth. The global need not stifle, nor the particular, prove barren (#235)
- 2) Recognise that there is a place for the poor and their culture, their aspirations, and their potential. Even people who can be considered dubious on account of their errors have something to offer which must not be overlooked. It is the convergence of peoples who, within the universal order, maintain their own individuality; it is the sum total of persons within a society which pursues the common good, which truly has a place for everyone (#236)

Reflection: *We are a catholic, universal Church, what does that mean? How do you see that expressed in our ministries?*