



ARCHDIOCESE
of MILWAUKEE

Proclaim Christ *and* Make Disciples *through the* Sacramental Life *of the* Church.

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Evangelization and the Sunday Mass: *Prepare, Welcome, Grow*



Archbishop
Jerome E. Listecki

will reach out to “seekers” and to those Catholics who are no longer active in their faith.

Many of us have seen the statistics that fewer Catholics attend Mass, that there is a growing body of Americans who identify themselves as “former Catholics,” and that too many of our young people describe themselves as having no religious affiliation at all. While the statistics may seem overwhelming, there is much we can do to change them: **follow Jesus.**

We begin by paying attention to what Jesus did. He preached, prayed, healed, forgave, wept, ate and sacrificed. He accompanied sinners and led them to know God, the Father.

Doing what Jesus did is **discipleship**. Each of us is called to discipleship, to the work of changing our culture, and to igniting, renewing and energizing our Sunday celebrations. To begin our work, we must take a fresh look

This year, I asked that parishes place a special emphasis on “Evangelization and the Sunday Mass.” I pray that people will grow in their understanding and appreciation of the Mass, and

at Sunday worship in every parish in our archdiocese – and a fresh look at ourselves. How do we do this?

First, **we prepare for worship**. We know that every Sunday is the Lord’s day, but **Sunday is also our day**. Sunday is our day to leave behind the weekday routines, and to give thanks and praise to God. Every day is a day to pray individually, and when we come together for Mass, we praise God – together – as a community. Making Mass our top priority in our parishes means that we raise the standard of excellence in liturgical music, in preaching, and in our

Sunday ministries.

Second, **we welcome everyone. Disciples are called to hospitality.** When we turn to prayer, we need to examine how open we are, how hospitable our parishes are. We want to think we are welcoming, but in many cases, we often welcome only those with whom we are comfortable. We ask the Lord to show us challenging, new ways to extend a genuinely warm welcome to strangers. We need to particularly focus on how we welcome nonbelievers and

See EVANGELIZATION on page 2.



Together, We Can Help Grow Our Parish

Will you listen to my confession? I need to improve my homilies. I know it. We need to continue to improve the quality of our sacred music. We need better faith formation. Improvement is needed in many areas. But our efforts are wasted if we turn off people who are coming to us.

Ask your friends about their parish. You will often hear not a reference to homilies or music, but whether they think their parish is “warm” or “cold.” You will hear about how they feel they are treated, and whether they feel a sense of belonging.

The Mass is central to evangelization. It offers in abundance what people are seeking, religious or not: community in a lonely world, eternal life where everything seems temporary, true mercy where contentiousness seems to prevail, hope in the face of violence and hatred. But this all has to start somewhere, and it's often at the front door. Studies show that people today look for faith communities that are welcoming.

As Catholics, we need to courageously look at ourselves, and how truly welcoming we are. The future of our faith in this part of the world depends tremendously on the laity, called to be disciples and to form new disciples.

How can I help my parish grow and show others the great beauty contained within our walls? How do I approach the Eucharist?

- **Identify yourself as a “parish ambassador.”** Whether you wear a nametag as part of a formal ministry or not, the way you treat those around you will impact whether they return



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next Sunday. Genuinely greet those who might be new, have young children, or seem to be visiting. Express your interior joy through a smile and body language.

- It's challenging for parents to bring children to Mass. Compliment parents on their efforts, even if imperfect. **Make your parish welcoming to noisy children.** A dirty look or scolding word, in my experience, generally drives away families and it's hard to get a second chance.

- **Look alive!** Sing along even if you are uncomfortable, or at least just open the hymnal. The person next to you is counting on you. Speak the prayers, listen to the homily, be an active participant. Arrive early and stay until the end of Mass.

- **Be a companion.** Be part of small discipleship groups and scripture studies. The best way to grow in faith is with others!

- In order to improve music, maintain our worship spaces, or keep pastoral staff, we have to make our parish **our first priority in financial stewardship.**

- **We need your help.** Become a liturgical minister. Join the choir. Anything you can do is welcome. The “Church” isn't just your pastor, or the staff, or a bishop or the pope. Be part of the solution from where you are. Let's work on this together!

Sunday is the most important thing we do as Catholics and it is time to re-orient ourselves. We have a great gift – sharing it is up to all of us. As a pastor, I'm committed to working on this. We'll only be successful if we work together!

Evangelization (*from page 1*)

those who have been away, and help them participate in Mass, especially during times when we know they are with us – Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Easter, weddings and funerals. We need to focus on how we welcome young families with small children. We need to become parish ambassadors who welcome

churchgoers of all varieties.

Third, **we grow in our faith.** Like other relationships, our bond with Jesus and each other grows as we learn and spend time together, always understanding the importance of developing a personal prayer life and appreciating communal liturgies. In the context of the Sunday

Mass, this means learning more about the liturgy, and entering deeply into its prayer. **Disciples are called to companionship,** meaning that we don't just show up for Sunday Mass, but we journey with each other. We mentor newcomers; we share our journey with each other, as we seek ways to grow in our faith. **See you at Mass!**



Intentional Discipleship Habit Five:

Serve Jesus in the Least Often

Intentional discipleship takes practice. We practice our Catholic discipleship by repeating and strengthening six essential habits. Today we focus on **Habit Five: Serve Jesus in the Least Often.**

All the habits of discipleship engage us in a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. We intentionally seek him out to let his power and presence reach us, call us, form us and send us. Through him, we are converted and brought into deeper communion with the Trinity, our neighbors and ourselves.

We serve the “least” of our sisters and brothers often because they are a direct encounter with Christ. Jesus reminds us of this when he says, “...whatever you did for the least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mt. 25:40). Serving the poor and outcast is actually a double encounter. We serve Jesus’ kin as well as Christ himself!

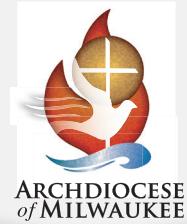
The 6 Habits of Catholic Intentional Discipleship

- Encounter Jesus in Daily Prayer Time
- Know Jesus in Daily Scripture Reflection
- Receive Jesus in the Eucharist Often
- Seek Jesus’ Mercy in Reconciliation Often
- Serve Jesus in the Least Often
- Share Jesus in Regular Parish Service

Prayer for the Mission of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

(Shortened Version)

Almighty and ever living God,
we praise you and we bless you,
for you are great indeed!
Grant, we pray,
as on that first Pentecost,
that tongues of fire may descend upon us,
and that the driving wind of your Holy Spirit
may blow boldly into our hearts.
Embolden us, O God,
so that we may go forth to proclaim
your Gospel and renew the face of the earth.
In this Archdiocese of Milwaukee,
we humbly pray for strength and fortitude
to follow your great commission:
to go and make disciples of all people,
living our faith through word and deed.
We ask all this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE MISSION STATEMENT

To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ through his saving death and resurrection by calling, forming and sending disciples to go and make new disciples. As a people, we are called to encounter Jesus and grow as disciples through the sacramental life of the Church.

La Evangelización y la Misa Dominical: *Preparar, Acoger, Crecer*



Arzobispo
Jerome E. Listecki

Este año, pedí que las parroquias dieran un énfasis especial a la “evangelización y la Misa Dominical.” Elevo mis oraciones para que la gente desarrolle su comprensión y su apreciación por

la Misa, y para que se acerquen a los que “buscan” y a los católicos que ya no son activos en su fe.

Muchos hemos visto las estadísticas de que hay menos católicos que asisten a Misa, que hay un aumento de estadounidenses que se identifican a sí mismos como “ex-católicos”, y que muchos de nuestros jóvenes dicen no tener ninguna afiliación religiosa en absoluto. Mientras que las estadísticas pueden parecer abrumadoras, hay mucho que podemos hacer para cambiarlas: **seguir a Jesús.**

Empezamos poniendo atención a lo que Jesús hizo. Él predicó, oró, sanó, perdonó, lloró, comió y sacrificó. Él acompañó a los pecadores y los llevó a conocer a Dios, el Padre.

Haciendo lo que Jesús hizo es **discipulado**. Cada uno de nosotros es llamado al discipulado, a trabajar para cambiar

nuestra cultura, y para encender, renovar y animar nuestras celebraciones dominicales. Para comenzar nuestro trabajo, tenemos que ver con nuevos ojos como celebramos la Misa Dominical en todas las parroquias de nuestra Arquidiócesis - y a nosotros mismos. ¿Cómo hacemos esto?

En primer lugar, nos preparamos **para adorar**. Sabemos que cada domingo es el día del Señor, pero el **domingo es también nuestro día**. El domingo es nuestro día para dejar atrás la rutina de la semana, y para dar gracias y alabanza a Dios. Cada día es un día para orar individualmente, y cuando nos reunimos para la Misa, alabamos a Dios - juntos – en comunidad. Haciendo la Misa nuestra máxima prioridad en nuestras parroquias significa que elevamos el nivel de excelencia en la música litúrgica, en la predicación y en nuestros ministerios dominicales.

En segundo lugar, **damos la bienvenida a todos. Los discípulos son llamados a la hospitalidad**. Cuando acudimos a la oración, tenemos que examinar si demostramos una actitud abierta, que tan acogedoras son nuestras parroquias. Queremos pensar que somos acogedores, pero en muchos casos, a menudo damos la bienvenida a sólo aquellos con los que nos sentimos a gusto. Le pedimos al Señor que nos muestre nuevas formas desafiantes

de extender una cálida bienvenida a extraños. Debemos prestar atención a la forma en que damos la bienvenida a los que no creen y los que han estado ausentes, y ayudarles a participar en la Misa, especialmente en esos momentos en que sabemos que están con nosotros – la Navidad, el Miércoles de Ceniza, la Cuaresma, la Pascua, las bodas y los funerales. Tenemos que enfocarnos en cómo damos la bienvenida a las familias jóvenes con niños pequeños. Necesitamos convertirnos en embajadores parroquianos que dan la bienvenida a diversos feligreses.

En tercer lugar, **crecemos en nuestra fe**. Al igual que otras relaciones, nuestro vínculo con Jesús y con los demás crece a medida que aprendemos y compartimos tiempo juntos, siempre comprendiendo la importancia de desarrollar una vida de oración personal y valorando las liturgias comunales. En el contexto de la Misa Dominical, esto significa aprender más sobre la liturgia, y entrar profundamente en su oración. **Los discípulos están llamados al compañerismo**, lo que significa que no solamente acudimos a la Misa dominical, pero que caminamos juntos. Orientamos a los recién llegados; compartimos el camino juntos, ya que buscamos maneras de crecer en nuestra fe. **¡Nos vemos en Misa!**

El quinto hábito del discipulado intencional: *Servir a Jesús en los más pequeños con frecuencia*

El discipulado intencional requiere práctica. Practicamos nuestro discipulado católico repitiendo y formando seis hábitos esenciales. Hoy nos enfocaremos en el quinto hábito: servir a Jesús en los más pequeños con frecuencia.

Todos los hábitos del discipulado nos comprometen a un encuentro personal con Jesucristo. Lo buscamos intencionalmente para dejar que su poder y presencia nos llegue, nos llame, nos forme y nos envíe. A través de él, nos transformamos, alcanzando una comunión profunda con la

Trinidad, el prójimo y nosotros mismos.

Servimos a los más “pequeños” o humildes de las hermanas y hermanos a menudo porque son un encuentro directo con Cristo. Jesús nos recuerda de esto cuando dice: “cuando lo hicieron con alguno de los más pequeños de estos mis hermanos, me lo hicieron a mí”. (Mt. 25:40). Sirviendo a los pobres y los marginados es en realidad un doble encuentro. ¡Servimos a los hermanos de Jesús, así como a Cristo mismo!