



To Mary, Queen of the Apostles, model of evangelization

Mary, Virgin and Mother,
 you who, moved by the Holy Spirit,
 welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith:
 as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One,
 help us to say our own “yes” to the urgent call, as pressing as ever,
 to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Filled with Christ’s presence,
 you brought joy to John the Baptist,
 making him exult in the womb of his mother.
 Brimming over with joy, you sang of the great things done by God.
 Standing at the foot of the cross with unyielding faith,
 you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection,
 and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit
 so that the evangelizing Church might be born.

Obtain for us now a new ardour born of the resurrection,
 that we may bring to all the Gospel of life which triumphs over death.
 Give us a holy courage to seek new paths,
 that the gift of unfading beauty may reach every man and woman.

Virgin of listening and contemplation,
 Mother of love, Bride of the eternal wedding feast,
 pray for the Church, whose pure icon you are,
 that she may never be closed in on herself
 or lose her passion for establishing God’s kingdom.

Star of the new evangelization,
 help us to bear radiant witness to communion,
 service, ardent and generous faith,
 justice and love of the poor,
 that the joy of the Gospel may reach to the ends of the earth,
 illuminating even the fringes of our world.

Mother of the living Gospel,
 wellspring of happiness for God’s little ones,
 pray for us. Amen. Alleluia!

(From the Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii gaudium, 288)

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH MEMBER FOR THE CONGREGATION

All the People of God are responsible for proclaiming the Gospel and we are all missionary disciples. This is confirmed by Pope Francis in the Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium. But, within this collective responsibility, there are specific charisms born at the service of "evangelizing communion", and at the origin of this communion there is the responsibility of each member, called to contribute to the development of his institution with his own activity and before that with personal growth in commitment.

Truth

■ **Listening to the Word of the Apostle Paul**

The Apostle reminds Timothy of the seriousness of the task of preaching the Gospel and entreats him to endure with patience, courage and perseverance every trial, in the face of opposition, the hostility, indifference and defection of many. Our current reality is not very different; Saint Paul urges us not to forget the importance of proclaiming the Gospel today and the need to remain faithful to the commitments of our vocation.

■ **From the Second Letter to Timothy (4:1-5)**

In the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by the hope I have of his coming and his kingdom, I urge you to preach the word and insist on it in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke and encourage, always with all patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will no longer endure sound doctrine, but in their eagerness to hear what is new, they will accumulate for themselves after their own liking. And they will abandon the truth to hear myths. So be always prudent, put up with suffering, give yourself to your work of preaching the Gospel, fulfil your ministry.

■ ■ **Listening to the Word of the Magisterium**

Everyone is responsible for proclaiming the Gospel, but we have received a specific charism in the service of "evangelizing communion". Each member is responsible with the commitment to identify with Christ for effective evangelization. It is essential to

help members with more experience to other younger people, so that everyone feels responsible for the growth and apostolic projection of the institution.

From the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (nos. 169-171, 173).

In a culture paradoxically suffering from anonymity and, at the same time, obsessed with the details of other people's lives, shamelessly given over to morbid curiosity, the Church must look more closely and sympathetically whenever necessary. [...] The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life. [...] We need to practice the art of listening, which is more than simply hearing. Listening, in communication, is an openness of the heart which makes possible that closeness without which genuine spiritual encounter cannot occur. Listening helps us to find the right gesture and word which shows that we are more than simply bystanders. Only through such respectful and compassionate listening can we enter on the paths of true growth and awaken a yearning for the Christian ideal: the desire to respond fully to God's love and to bring to fruition what he has sown in our lives.

Genuine spiritual accompaniment always begins and flourishes in the context of service to the mission of evangelization. Paul's relationship with Timothy and Titus provides an example of this accompaniment and formation which takes place in the midst of apostolic activity. Entrusting them with the mission of remaining in each city to "put in order what remains to be done" (*Tit* 1:5; cf. *1 Tim* 1:3-5), Paul also gives them rules for their personal lives and their pastoral activity. This is clearly distinct from every kind of intrusive accompaniment or isolated self-realization. Missionary disciples accompany missionary disciples.

■■■ *Listening to the Founder's Word*

In order to reach the necessary maturity and become a responsible, dynamic and creative member, it is necessary to follow a training itinerary that has an initial moment, but must be extended throughout life. This draws attention to the importance of good initial training, but also to the grave responsibility of each member to take care, at every stage of life, of integral formation in view of the mission.

From the volume *Anima e corpo per il Vangelo* (pp. 263-264)

Every healthy education aims at making the work of the educator superfluous little by little; to [ensure] that the person being educated becomes

independent within the right limits of the educator. And this is especially true in the formation of consciousness. His purpose is "the perfect man, to the extent of the fullness of Christ's age" (Eph 4:13), therefore the adult man, who also has the courage of responsibility. [...]

Being an adult is very different from being able to do it yourself. Neither young people, nor the adults nor the elderly are capable of doing their own thing. The Constitutions provide for many things, so that no one falls into serious mistakes, relying excessively on one's own knowledge, strength and ability.

Young people have to learn the way of life; adults, even those who are already superior, have to conform themselves to the Constitutions and depend on those above them; and those above have to obey, feel, serve, help, ask for more advice, because every act of his has wider consequences. It's just those who don't walk who never need to ask for the way.

Way

Enlightened by the words of Saint Paul, Pope Francis and Blessed James Alberione, we compare our lives by asking ourselves what needs to change in order to identify ourselves with the ideal of the mature, responsible member, who contributes to creating a dynamic, happy, apostolic Community. The Founder proposes this examination:

"If faith, docility and prayer are necessary to match the vocation, do we possess these three conditions? Is there a living faith in us, or languid faith? Do we know the beauty, the preciousness, and the grace of vocation? And do we understand to what end the Lord has destined us? What paradise awaits us? And are we loyal? Have we really left everything, and do we really follow Jesus Christ with full dedication, like Saint Paul?" (*Per un rinnovamento spirituale*, p. 190).

Life

*In this month of May we entrust ourselves to the "Mother of the living Gospel" and ask that she intercedes so that the invitation to a new stage of evangelization "may be accepted by the whole ecclesial community" and by each of its members. There is no shortage of moments of aridity, darkness and even of fatigue... It was in this way that Mary remained intimate with the mystery of her Son, and advanced on her journey of faith (cf. *Evangelii gaudium*, n. 287).*