

# Everything, everywhere, all in Christ

*And as he sat at dinner in Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him.*

*- Mark 2:15*

In 1988, Pope St John Paul II published his Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* (Christ's Faithful Laity), a document expressing the Church's understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the lay faithful. In its introduction, he identified two temptations for the laity to avoid:

1. To be so strongly invested in the Church and fail to become actively engaged in the secular world.
2. To separate faith from life, and thus fail to live out the Gospel in the world.

These temptations hint at a divide between the sacred and the secular – that God is only interested in the things we do in Church, for example attending Mass, serving in ministries, or getting involved in mission trips. On the other hand, activities of life outside the walls of Church (work, home, school, leisure, rest) belong to the secular side of life and are thus unimportant to God. This is false and far from what Jesus calls us to do as His disciples.

In Scripture, we see that the Son of God, though sinless, came into the world and lived a life like ours. He



did not contend Himself with sitting in the Temple, but made it His mission to live in the world. He chose to dine with sinners (Mark 2:15) and it was His love and actions towards them that drew them into relationship with God. He lived an “ordinary” life with His family and even worked as a carpenter (Mark 6:3).

Today, we are called to be “little Christs” in our modern world. Our faith should not be reserved for Sundays, relevant only when we are in Church. Instead, we should draw others into relationship with Christ through our words and deeds. That is what evangelisation is all about! Here are three areas where we can be witnesses of Christ in our world today:





# Home

Our homes are our first and greatest schools of love. It is often harder to show love to those closest to us, but it is with family that we learn how to love selflessly and unconditionally. Saint Paul gives us the model of a Christian household in Ephesians 5:21-33, calling on husbands and wives to live a life of love, fidelity, and fruitfulness just as Christ did for His Church.

For parents, Proverbs 22:6 reminds us that the way we parent our children will significantly impact how they are as adults. Are we raising them to be disciples of Christ? Children, strive always to keep the Fifth Commandment to honour your parents (Exodus 20:12) no matter how difficult it may be! These are heavy responsibilities to carry, but when we leave earth, we must account to God (Romans 14:12) for how we have done our best to bring our family to heaven with us.



Our homes are also places where we can show love to others. In Genesis 18, Abraham welcomed the three strangers into his tent and offered them food and drink. This provides the background for the command, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13:2)



Let us open our homes to the needy. Let us host our community. Let us provide our children’s friends with a place to study. When we invite others into our homes with love, we also invite God into our hearts.

*Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.*

*- Pro 22:6*





# Occupation



Many of us spend 8 to 10 hours a day with our colleagues. It is at work where we meet non-Christians, and perhaps those who may be hostile towards our faith. How we speak and act in public is under scrutiny, which also makes our workplaces fertile ground for evangelisation.

If our colleagues know that we are

Christian, we must be sure to act like one! We must show that our faith is not simply lip service but a fundamental core of our identity. Although some knowledge of theology or apologetics can be useful in sharing our faith, it is ultimately how we behave and interact with our colleagues that can either draw them to Christ or cause scandal.

*So God created humankind[a] in his image, in the image of God he created them*

*- Gen 1:27*

We must also be Christ-like in our interactions with vendors, clients, and customers. While these interactions may be stressful, they are also opportunities to practise patience and understanding. In the heat of a moment, we must remember to see the other as he or she truly is – a child of God, made in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:27).

Pope St Paul VI put it most eloquently: “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.” (Evangelií Nuntiandi, 41)





# Daily activities

Our faith should permeate our entire being and thus be evident in all areas of our lives. From coffee with friends to grocery shopping, activities outside our homes and offices are also ways in which we can be witnesses. Our choice of activity can also draw a friend to God.

Do we turn down an invitation for

Friday-night drinks so that we can attend a cell-group session? That is a potential conversation starter with a non-Catholic friend, and may end with you inviting him or her to Mass.

From the cleaner to the cashier, we are called to see Christ in everyone and to be Christ to everyone. While most interactions

we do not afford us the time to share about Jesus, a simple smile or “God bless!” may help the other person come to know Christ. St Paul reminds us, “whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).



## Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life!

The word Mass, referring to the Eucharistic Celebration which we participate in each Sunday, is derived from the Latin word *missa*. Every Mass ends with the words *Ite, missa est*, meaning, “Go, it is sent” – “it” referring to the Church which we are part of. We are being sent back into the world as missionary disciples. Having been nourished by the Body of Christ, let us now be witnesses of Christ!

