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From +John...

Kia tau te Rangimarie kia koutou

“Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 41). That quote is one of the most quoted phrases of Pope Saint Paul VI, who went on to say- **“It is therefore primarily by her conduct and by her life that the Church will evangelize the world,** (also EN 41). That was published in 1975.

Some of the questions we ask today as we try to articulate a Gospel that is meaningful and relevant for modern New Zealand are **“What can we do? How do we proclaim the Gospel today? How do we reach out to a secular and plural world?”**

The answer of Pope St Paul VI was **“be witnesses.”**

The answer of Pope Francis today is **“mercy.”**

Pope Francis is reminding us today that the patience to listen and to serve is more important than preaching. He says: **“Do you want to convince someone to be a Catholic? No! No! No! You are to meet him/her. They are your brother or sister! That is enough And you are to help him/her; everything else will be done by Jesus. The Holy Spirit does this.”**

Sometimes it may be that we try too hard in the Church and ask too much of ourselves, trying to find an answer when silence, respect and compassion are all that is needed. I remember copying out some words of the then Archbishop Tagle of Manila at the Synod on New Evangelization in 2010. He said: **“For the Church to be a place where people meet God, it needs to learn three things from the example of Jesus; humility, respect for others, and silence.....The Church must discover the power of silence.....Confronted with the sorrows, doubts and uncertainties of people, she cannot pretend to give easy solutions. In Jesus, silence becomes that way of attentive listening, compassion and prayer. It is the way to truth.”**

- How do we live as witnesses today?
- Are we a people of mercy today?
- Do we have the courage to live in silence today?
- Are we following the example of Jesus: humility, respect for others, and silence?

Remember too: **“Jesus wants evangelisers who proclaim the Good News not only with word, but above all by a life transfigured by God’s presence.”** (EG 259)

With every blessing

Naku noa

John

NEWS ...

Cardinal’s Lunch - final chance to register for this luncheon event. Wednesday 28 August 12-2pm Inter-Continental Hotel, Grey Street. Register at <https://cl2019.lilregie.com/>

Clergy Only Day 24 September 2019 Clergy are asked to please remember to register for this at t.halliday@wn.catholic.org.nz . Registrations are required by 13 September.

Another **Stewardship Network meeting** will be held at Sacred Heart School Hall Petone on Saturday 21st September (1pm- 4pm). These days are hosted for anyone who has attended Stewardship Workshops/Days of any kind. I encourage attendance at such gatherings as this as we work with each other to embrace **Stewardship** as **“A Disciple’s Response.”** Contact Chris Walkerdine c.walkerdine@wn.catholic.org.nz or 04-4961706, to register.

Pope Francis has asked all Catholics to mark October as the Extraordinary Missionary Month. The Archdiocese is offering the programme **“Developing a Spirituality of Service”** that helps us explore our prayer and spirituality in the light of mission. This is composed of six-sessions and is to be run in groups throughout the month of October. We are encouraging everyone to take the opportunity to be part of this by joining a parish group or accessing it online and working through it at home. Please register your interest by August 31st with Chris Walkerdine @ (04) 496-1706 or email c.walkerdine@wn.catholic.org.nz

“We are not people who go backwards. No! We are people who go forward, always. Baptised and sent: the Christian goes forward and this is what ‘sent’ means. It is the Holy Spirit that impels me to go forward.”

Pope Francis