



Encounters of Hope: The Process of Evangelization in our Daily Lives

Reflection Guide for Each Session

5, 12, 19, 26 APRIL 2022



OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS
CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS



Introduction

In April 2022, the Office for Evangelization and Catechesis hosted a webinar series, titled *Encounters of Hope: The Process of Evangelization in our Daily Lives*, inviting leaders of catechesis and evangelization to participate in a national discussion on hope, encounter, and the process of evangelization. A call to take stock and reflect on our approaches in ministry, the four recorded sessions of *Encounters of Hope* provide starting points for:

- Discussion on meaningful encounters with Jesus as a starting point for the faith journey,
- Conversation about accompaniment and cooperation with the Holy Spirit,
- Reflection on our call to be missionary disciples.

A reflection guide is included and may be used by individuals or in small groups after viewing the webinar. You may wish to offer in-person or online gatherings to view the webinar followed by a period of reflection and discussion.

Materials

It may be helpful to have the following materials:

- A Catholic Bible;
- The video recordings of each session (if not viewing the videos as a group); and
- Additional materials and resources provided by each keynote presenter (optional).

Guidelines for Discussions

- All participants are invited to contribute to the discussions; some may choose not to speak. The group must respect each person's decision.
- One person speaks at a time.
- Participants, if they choose, may respond to the speaker in a helpful yet non-judgmental/non-confrontational way.
- Respect each other and commit to confidentiality to promote trust.
- Sometimes a person requires more time to tell their story than is allotted in the discussion. The facilitator may offer to speak with a person one-on-one during a break or after the session.



Session 1: Evangelization: Encounters of Hope

Keynote: Julianne Stantz

1. Julianne talks about four stages of a Christian's journey: Encounter (Pre-evangelization), Accompaniment (Evangelization), Community (Discipleship), and Mission (Missionary Discipleship). Our encounters with Jesus will be unique to our individual experiences.

How would you describe each of these stages of your faith journey?

2. *Read Jn 4:1–42.* What did you notice about the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman in the gospel narrative? How did Jesus act toward her and how did she respond?
3. How do Julianne's methodologies of hope, healing, hospitality, and 'pull strategies' (e.g., storytelling) help bring a person to Encounter Jesus?
4. Julianne says that "The Holy Spirit is the prime evangelizer" and that we are called to work with the Holy Spirit, as a Church, to evangelize and to reach out. Answering this call may require us to rethink all our past approaches and all our activities (cf. *Directory for Catechesis*, 303).

In my parish, what are pastoral activities that stopped bearing fruit a long time ago (e.g., bingo and fish fries)? How can we, as a parish community, rethink our pastoral activities with a missionary spirit and "have courage, go forward, make noise" as Pope Francis calls us to do? (Address to Youth from the Diocese of Piacenza-Bobbio at St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, 29 August, 2019.)

5. Are we spending more time triaging existing ministries or leaning into where the Holy Spirit is moving us? How are we raising up the next generation of saints from our time?
6. Are our pastoral activities centred in deep intercessory prayer?
7. How can we promote a culture of prayer for and trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit?



Session 2: The Art of Accompaniment

Keynote: Fr. Frank S. Donio, S.A.C., D.Min.

1. Father Frank quotes Pope Francis on accompaniment,

Although it sounds obvious, spiritual accompaniment must lead others ever closer to God, in whom we attain true freedom. (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 169)

How do I accompany others to Jesus through my ministries and pastoral activities?

2. What obstacles to our ministries and pastoral activities do we meet in today's societal and technological realities?
3. Father Frank reminds us that intimate communion with Christ should be brought about through a process of accompaniment (cf. *Directory for Catechesis*, 3).

How can we, with closeness and compassion, accompany our fellow missionary disciples, those to whom we minister, and others in our lives?

4. Pope Francis said the qualities of a mentor include:

Being a faithful Christian who engages with the Church and the world; someone who constantly seeks holiness; someone who is a confidant without judging. Similarly, someone who actively listens to the needs of young people and responds in kind; someone deeply loving and self-aware; someone who recognizes his or her limits and knows the joys and sorrows of the spiritual journey. (*Christus Vivit*, 246)

How can we cultivate a pastoral culture that seeks holiness, reserves judgement, listens, and recognizes limits?



Session 3: Catechesis: Echoes of Hope

Keynote: Anne Walsh, D.Min.

1. How should the witness of an ordinary Christian life speak to the power of the encounter with Jesus Christ? How does mine?
2. Anne reminded us of Lk. 24:13–35, where Jesus accompanies two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

How does Jesus accompany these disciples on the road and then in the house? How do the disciples accompany one another after their encounter with Jesus?

3. Experiences of beauty in Christian art (e.g., Celtic High Crosses, stained glass windows, statuary, iconography, church architecture) deepen our encounters with Jesus Christ.

Where do I experience beauty in my cultural context today (e.g., movies, music, poetry, storytelling, contemporary art)? How have some of these experiences brought me closer to Jesus?

4. Christian hope is rooted in the experience of the encounter with Jesus.

What does a hopeful Christian life look like? How does my hope in Jesus Christ sustain and strengthen me?



Session 4: Missionary Discipleship: Hope to the World

Keynote: Mgr. Paul-André Durocher

1. Archbishop Durocher presents a wholistic view of the Church as a body with organs (association), skeleton (institution), and engagement in the world (movement).

How does this vision of the Church as a body help us to be missionary disciples that go out? What are our roles as missionary disciples in the Church as a body?

2. Baptism is a lifelong project of building one's character as a son or daughter of God, revealing our deepest identity in that relationship.

How do I respond to this invitation to relationship with God? How should our relationship as children of God affect our relationships with others?

3. Each of us is "called by name" in baptism and "sent in Jesus's name" in confirmation.

How does a person who is called by name and sent in Jesus's name live out that mission?

4. Pope Francis calls each of us, saying "see the entirety of your life as a mission" (*Gaudete et Exultate*, 23).

How does the Holy Spirit guide my pastoral activities as I live out my call to be a missionary disciple?

5. How do I allow the Holy Spirit to forge in me what Archbishop Durocher calls the "personal mystery that can reflect Jesus Christ in today's world?"



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