

Mission POSSIBLE!

ASCENSION: ZEAL FOR SOULS

King David tells us in Psalms 139, “You (God) formed my inmost being; You knit me in my mother’s womb. I praise You, so wonderfully You made me; wonderful are Your works! My very self You knew; my bones were not hidden from You. When I was a being made in secret, fashioned in the depths of the earth, Your eyes foresaw my actions.” As King David reveals, God made each of us as one of a kind human beings. He designed every person with special and unique qualities and He gave each of us gifts and talents that He designed specifically for us.

God loves every human person as His amazing creation and although we are all born with Original Sin, He sees our potential and He helps us to reach it if we open our hearts and minds to His message. He knows what we are capable of achieving and through our Baptism and Confirmation we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the grace we need to accomplish the mission He gives us. What is that mission? It is the same mission He gave to His Apostles in Matthew 28:19, “Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations.” In addition, Blessed John Paul II tells us in *Redemptoris missio* 23, “The ultimate purpose of mission is to enable people to share in the communion which exists between the Father and the Son. The disciples are to live in unity with one another, remaining in the Father and the Son, so that the world may know and believe (Jn 17:21-23). This is a very important missionary text. It makes us understand that we are missionaries above all because of *what we are* as a Church whose innermost life is unity in love, even before we become missionaries *in word or deed*.” Another name for “making disciples of all nations” or “sharing in the communion of Father and Son” is evangelization. God has called us all through our Baptism to use the unique gifts he gave us to evangelize our brothers and sisters in Christ. To put it another way God has called us to share our friendship with His Son, Jesus with everyone we meet, because everyone we meet is our brother or sister in Christ.

How do we prepare ourselves for the mission God gave us?

- Strengthen our relationship with Jesus through prayer (examples: daily conversations with God, rosary, etc.) and receiving the Sacraments (examples: consistently receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.)
- Strengthen ourselves through faith formation (examples: reading Scripture; the Catechism, take classes or seminars from trusted Catholic sources like Paul VI; trusted internet sites, etc) .
- Strengthen our zeal for souls by remembering what Jesus suffered for each one of us.
- With Christ as our example, treat everyone we meet with dignity and respect (examples: smile and say hello; when visiting with someone give them uninterrupted attention; show you care by remembering the concerns they share and ask about them during the next visit, make friends in Christ etc).
- Study the distinct features of all the places in our lives: home, work, school, athletic fields, etc. looking for opportunities to share Christ through our word and action. (Example: If allowed place a crucifix or favorite prayer near our workspace to remind us that Christ goes with us wherever we go; when someone asks what we did over our weekend don’t forget to mention that we went to Mass and share something special we noticed there; share with others the times we most feel Christ present and working in our lives (example: a particularly amazing day with family; or a gorgeous sunset that made us realize the wonder of God’s creation; the remarkable results of a special prayer, etc.)
- Remain open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. (Example: if we see someone that looks sad at work and a little voice inside our head says “Offer a smile and some encouragement to him or her today” don’t ignore that little voice.

How can we share Christ with others? We can put our preparation into action:

- Reach out to people through love just as Jesus Christ did during his earthly life.
- Grow closer in our personal relationship with Jesus so we can “BE” Christ to others.

Q. In what specific ways can I prepare myself for the mission God gave me?

Q. How can I use the gifts and talents I have received to share Christ with others?

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