

FAITH CHAT

with James & John

Are You Fulfilling Your Baptismal Calling To Evangelize And Catechize?

Know This...

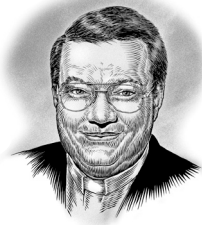
Armies succeed when soldiers understand, accept, and execute their marching orders. Jesus not only issued "marching orders" to His disciples, He issued marching orders to all His followers. As baptized Christians, we must seek justice and pursue peace. We must reach out and serve the needs of the poor, the hungry, and the disenfranchised. But, first and foremost, we must fulfill our baptismal calling by evangelizing and catechizing others in the Gospel of Christ Jesus.



John: Evangelization and catechesis start us on a journey to deepen our understanding of the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Church.

James: To live out our baptismal calling, we must share our faith.

Our baptism made us members of the Body of Christ; and as faithful members, Jesus calls us to evangelize and catechize.



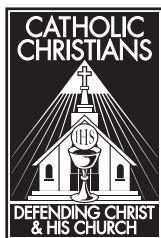
John: Evangelization is "the proclamation of Christ and His Gospel by word and the testimony of life, in fulfillment of Christ's command." (Catechism of the Catholic Church—[CCC])

James: Catechesis is "the education of children, young people, and adults in the faith of the Church through the teaching of Christian doctrine in an organic and systematic way to make them disciples of Christ." (CCC) Jesus is at the heart of catechesis.

John: When we evangelize and catechize, we point people to Him; and He closes the deal.

Deacon John Beckmann and Deacon James Russell are permanent deacons in the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

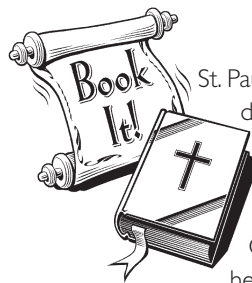
Please visit: www.catholicchristians.com for a more detailed version of



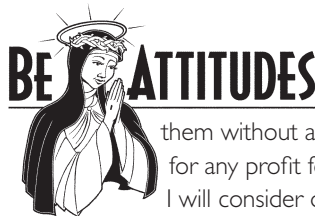
Jesus told His disciples, "Do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say. You will be given at that moment what you are to say. For it will not be you who speak but the Spirit of your Father who speaks through you." ^{Mt 10:19-20} Before He ascended into heaven, He issued our marching orders, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." ^{Mk 16:15-16} We must proclaim Jesus without fear.

PAPA SAYS

Pope Paul VI said, "There is no true evangelization if the name of Jesus is not proclaimed. To evangelize is first to bear witness to Jesus Christ." ^{Evangelii Nuntiandi} Pope John Paul II said, "The growth and vitality of the Catholic Church depends on guarding doctrine and teaching the faithful to defend and spread it." St. Peter said, "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear." ^{1 Pet 3:15-16a}



St. Paul offers this advice, "Avoid foolish and ignorant debates, for you know that they breed quarrels. A slave of the Lord should not quarrel, but should be gentle with everyone, able to teach, tolerate, correcting opponents with kindness." ^{2 Tim 2:23-25a} Grace gives us the ability to avoid arguments and heated debates. "Pray perseveringly, be attentive to prayer; and pray in a spirit of thanksgiving. Be prudent in dealing with outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your speech be always gracious and in good taste, and strive to respond properly to all who address you." ^{Col 4:2, 5-6}



BE ATTITUDES God told St. Catherine of Siena, "I have put you among your neighbors ... love them without any concern for thanks and without looking for any profit for yourself. And whatever you do for them I will consider done for me." ^{The Dialogue} St. Francis of Assisi said, "Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary, use words." St. Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei, wrote, "Do not be afraid, or surprised, to see the resistance of some people's minds." ^{Furrow}

Lord Jesus, open my heart, mind, and soul to your love, wisdom, and grace. Give me the strength and courage to deepen my understanding and love for your Bride, the Church, and to share it with others. Energize and motivate me; strengthen and sustain me; move my heart, mind, and soul to a new level of faith that will consume my entire being through Christ our Lord. Amen.

