



# Missionary Sending

The end of the Gospel of Matthew recounts the saving and astonishing resurrection of Jesus from the dead. There, full of glory, Jesus commands the disciples who have been with him throughout his public ministry, “Do not be afraid! Go and tell my brothers to set out!” and later, “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations!” (Mt 28:10, 19).

“Jesus is not a personage from the past; he is a person living today. We do not know him from history books; we encounter him in life” (Pope Francis, Homily for the Easter Vigil, April 20, 2019). The life of Jesus did not happen years ago; it is something that is still happening now. As Christian disciples, we are called to bring this ever-present Life of God into the world.

But the way we invite matters. Think about a time when you were invited somewhere new. What made you go? What made you unafraid? It is a good practice to anticipate how someone else would receive an invitation from you, to think about and pray through how someone might desire or want to be invited. Jesus was the master of this, offering to make Peter, a fisherman, a fisher of men (Mt 4:18–20, Mk 1:16–18, Lk 5:1–11); identifying Nathaniel under the fig tree; and calling Matthew at the customs post. Jesus knew how to encounter another in their place of comfort while inviting them to more.



#### INVITATION #4

## “Invite One Back” and Accompany Those in Need and on the Margins

In this Year of Parish Revival we will launch an “Invite One Back” initiative that every parish can take part in. Imagine if every faithful Catholic invited one person in their inner-circle who has fallen away from attending Sunday Mass or had the courage to reach out to one coworker who seems interested in talking about faith? Our churches would be renewed and filled with communion—a desire we all long for.

How each parish will go about this “Invite One Back” initiative will look particular to each parish culture. Specific Sundays or an important liturgical feast could be named or designated in which the homily is inviting, welcoming, and informative. Opportunities include Bible studies in which new members are easily assimilated, or times of fellowship after adoration nights or Sunday Mass could be offered with refreshments and conversation that is warm and encouraging. Any invitation to a new encounter with Jesus and his bride, the Church, is a victory for the whole body of Christ.

The second part of this invitation encourages us to consider how we can identify and accompany those in need and on the margins. As part of the Mystical Body of Christ, Catholics all over the country can become the hands and feet of Jesus to bring his Good News to the mission field of their neighborhood and parish. The Church reminds us that “the Eucharist commits us to the poor” (CCC, no. 1397). “A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented” (*Deus caritas est*, no. 14).

Let us seize this moment as the great missionary opportunity of our time. When we hear the words, “Go forth, the Mass is ended,” our work as missionary disciples begins anew as we respond to the Lord’s command to “go and make disciples” by the faithful witness of our lives—by reaching out to the lost, the least, and the last. With confidence, let us entrust ourselves to the care and guidance of the Holy Spirit to bring about a Eucharistic Revival at this time in the life of the world!





## WANT TO GO DEEPER?

- ◆ Recommit to a social service and to the poor in the community
- ◆ Facilitate volunteer efforts at area organizations
- ◆ Invite someone to a small group
- ◆ Accompany or mentor someone in deeper discipleship

## INSPIRING EXAMPLES



The Archdioceses of Detroit and St. Louis participated in evangelization campaigns in which parishes planned creative ways to invite friends and family back to Mass during Christmas. Before the invitation was extended, meetings were organized to teach hospitality, how to invite, and simple tactics on how to make someone new feel welcome. Within such an anointed seasonal time, Christmas was a natural fit for invitation. The dioceses used videos, virtual resources, and personal connection to invite back Catholics. Parish priests prepared their homilies accordingly and hosted simple hospitality events.





*We want to  
**start a FIRE,**  
not a program.*



**BISHOP ANDREW COZZENS**  
Chairman of the USCCB's Committee  
on Evangelization and Catechesis



**This is just beginning...**

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