



# Session 4

## “Let down your Nets”

Christina Semmens  
Friday Morning

# The Challenge We Have Been Given

“Young people are the window through which the future enters the world. They are the window, and so they present us with great challenges...”



“This means that we have to create the material and spiritual conditions for their full development; to give them a solid basis on which to build their lives; to guarantee their safety and their education to be everything they can be; to pass on to them lasting values that make life worth living; to give them a transcendent horizon for their thirst for authentic happiness in their creativity for the good; to give them the legacy of a world worthy of human life; and to awaken in them their greatest potential as builders of their own destiny, sharing responsibility for the future of everyone.”

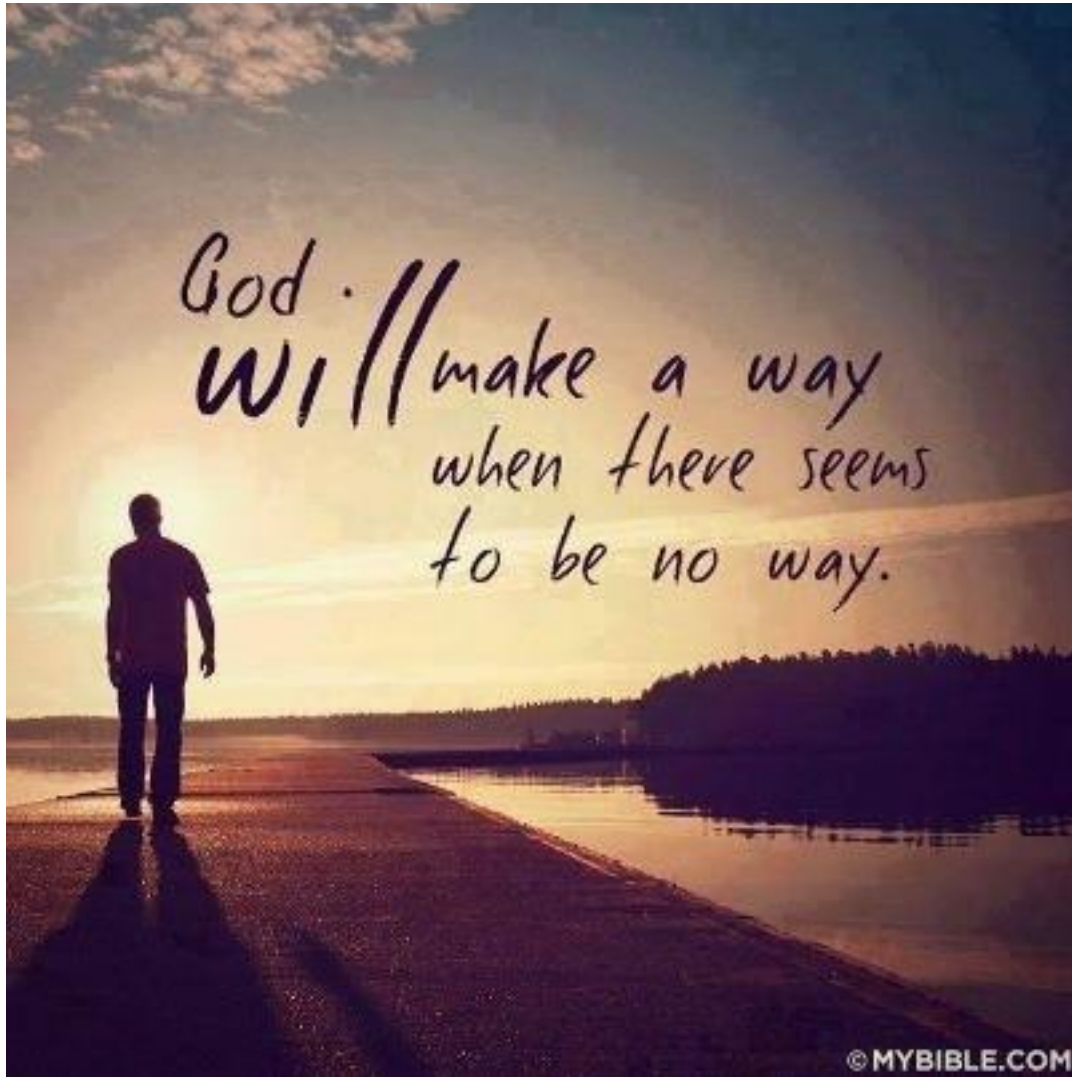
--Pope Francis, Address, July 22, 2013

# Where Have We Been?

- Reviewing where we have been so far...
  - Cultural and Religious Landscape are pretty dismal
  - Don't be Afraid. God has got this.
  - Stages in FID similar to stages of evangelization.
  - Know the goal—SAINTHOOD.
  - Need to get young people to the “starting line” on the journey to holiness.
  - Have to live it. Means being a disciple on “the Way” to sainthood, because you can't give what you don't have.
  - Sainthood is for everybody, and it's only 4 steps!
  - Prayer first, THEN apostolate.
  - Greatest tragedy in life is to not become a saint.
- What does sainthood look like?

“Each person would be engaged participants in God's plan and have ordered their lives so as to bear witness to the Lord in their families, workplaces, communities and the world.”

—Dr Tim Gray, “Walk the Walk”, Lighthouse Catholic Media CD



God.  
Will make a way  
when there seems  
to be no way.

# Some Ideas for Making it Concrete

- Fr Barron's spiritual disciplines and practices that we must cultivate (adapted from *My Beloved Son: Meditations for Lent*)
  - Find our identity in God
  - Prayer as the Key to Mission
  - Our Thirst for God
  - How to End our Alienation from God
  - How to Joyfully Embrace the Way to Happiness
- Patrick Madrid shared the following in a talk given in Huntsville in September:
  - Catholic faith needs to be our identity
  - We need to OWN our faith for ourselves
  - Church is messy, rambunctious, and in turmoil, but it endures
  - The Mass and the Eucharist are the REAL thing
  - Catholic faith is the TRUTH and needs to be shared the best we can, and let Spirit do the rest
  - Catholic Moral Teachings teach you what shortcuts NOT to use
  - Not enough to know why or what we believe, or what we do, must share the faith with sincerity and simplicity

# The “God-Sized Hole”

Connor Flannagan, a youth minister in Pennsylvania shared in his talk “The God-Sized Hole” the following ideas that every person needs to know:

- 1) We all have a “God-sized hole” in our hearts, because we are loved SO MUCH, but NOTHING can fill that hole except God
- 2) Need to know our identity as sons and daughters of God
- 3) Need to understand we are sinners; not because we are fundamentally “bad”, but because we sin makes us “just a little off” and makes us “miss the mark” (God)
- 4) When our relationship with God is “off the mark”, then usually this manifests itself in a physical, earthly way by rupturing or damaging our relationships with one another
- 5) That we are redeemed and loved beyond measure
- 6) When we try to fill the God-sized hole with other stuff, we tend to be miserable and unhappy
- 7) And we try to fill the hole with the wrong stuff because we don’t know that God is RIGHT here and NOW in the Eucharist, Reconciliation, Blessed Sacrament, Adoration
- 8) That when we are trying to figure out God’s will for us, where we find peace, that’s where God is—even if the path is difficult
- 9) The Lord usually works where we are most uncomfortable
- 10) We have to LIVE OUT love and find Jesus in others

WHEN WE HAVE  
NOTHING LEFT  
BUT GOD,  
WE DISCOVER  
THAT GOD  
IS ENOUGH.

# Other Ideas We Need to Share with JOY through Evangelization

- Life is a journey toward eternity
- We must all “put out into the deep”; to leave the peace of the lakeside and set out towards the encounter with God and with others
- Heaven is where you will see God and encounter the fullness of love, with no betrayals or deception, the fullness of beauty and greatness of knowledge; where you will be satisfied and be filled with great joy.
- The extent of the our joy in heaven will be related to our holiness here on earth—everything we do MATTERS
- Death is merely a transition to eternal union with God





# What evangelization might look like in practice...

Kimberly Hahn, in her talk, “How to Apply our Faith to our Families” makes these points:

- YOU must have a faith to pass on; an intimate, personal relationship with Christ
- Can not abrogate your responsibility to catechize your children
- Practical suggestions
  - Celebrate Baptismal Anniversaries
  - Explain the meaning of the Sign of the Cross
  - “SWORD” drills—memorize a Scripture verse to help with future struggles with temptations and challenges
  - After dinner “decade” of the Rosary
  - “Holy Huddle”—Thanksgiving after Communion
  - Offer up our children at Mass
  - Feasting and Fasting—Advent and Lent
  - First Fridays/First Saturdays
  - Guardian Angels—our “Warrior Companion” and witness
  - Get your children to Confession

# More practical suggestions...

- Communicate the importance of going to Mass—Body of Christ is less without everyone there AND need to be obedient to God’s laws
- Develop a relationship with Mary and the Saints
- Explain the Communion of Saints and encourage each child to find their own “pantheon” of saints over the years—not just at Confirmation
- Confirmation is the call to become a “soldier for Christ”—to protect, give witness, and stand guard
- Tithing--teach its importance as the giving of first fruits
- Prepare our children for fatherhood and motherhood by discussing what it means to be a husband/wife
- Play as much as you pray
- Adopt the elderly
- Every time you hear a siren, pray; every time you pass a Church, make a sign of the cross; every time you go by a graveyard, make sign of cross /offer a prayer
- Be a “contagious Catholic”

# Even more radical ideas...

- To build and foster trust among catechists and youth, assign a group of catechists to the same group of students for 3 year intervals
- Divide up your age groups into K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, 11-12
- Ensure that PRACTICES of faith correlate with the content of faith
- Have “faith projects” that are worked on together by catechists, youth AND parents
- CHALLENGE the youth; expect more than the minimum
- Allow youth to “drive the train” with their questions
- Ensure Catechists are modeling the faith through mentorship



Faith is taking the first step  
even when you don't

see the whole

stair case.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

# Some Questions to Consider

- What fundamental ideas, concepts and practices do you think need to be shared in order so that young people will get to the starting line of the spiritual journey to sainthood?
- What attitudes, behaviors, or practices need to be adjusted, modified or implemented to your PSR/RE program to ensure that young people are being prepared to pursue holiness?
- Do you speak comfortably and frequently about how your faith brings meaning to your life? If so, how can you share more effectively? If not, why not?
- How can you, your catechists and your parish make Pope Francis' "missionary option" in the Church a reality?
- How well are you, your catechists, and your parish community living out a joyful life of discipleship? What needs to be done to change that?



Encounter leads to *mission*,  
to sharing what we have  
received; and mission leads  
back to *encounter*, in an  
expanding cycle of grace.

---

JOSEPH LANGFORD

If the request is wrong,  
God says “**No**”

If the Timing is wrong,  
God says, “**Slow**”

If you are wrong,  
God says “**Grow**”

But if the request is right, the  
timing is right, and you are right,  
God says, “**Go**”

- Greg Laurie -



**DO NOT BE AFRAID.**

**DO NOT BE SATISFIED WITH  
MEDIOCRITY.**

**PUT OUT INTO THE DEEP,  
AND LET OUT YOUR  
NETS FOR A  
CATCH.**

**-BL. POPE JOHN PAUL II**

**[WWW.STLUKEPRODUCTIONS.COM](http://WWW.STLUKEPRODUCTIONS.COM)**



# Questions?

Christina Semmens

256-603-0225

[semcsem@aol.com](mailto:semcsem@aol.com)

[www.christinasemmens.com](http://www.christinasemmens.com)