



HOW TO BE EVANGELIZERS

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Bearing witness and proclaiming the Christian message, “configuring ourselves to Christ and following his same way of life”: this was Benedict XVI's suggest for “how to be evangelizers” during his Homily at the Mass celebrated in St Peter's Square on Sunday morning, 21 October, at the end of the rite when seven new saints were proclaimed. Three men and four women, both religious and lay people from five different continents: models of holiness for a Church that with the Year of Faith, 50 years after Vatican II, desires to renew the proclamation of the Gospel to men and strives to inspire and support. An important suggestion for the Synod on the new evangelization, which is to conclude in one week, and on World Mission Day.

The Pope proposed in his Homily the most meaningful aspects of the life of each of the new saints, underlining what makes their witness of faith pertinent to our lives today.

As if to emphasize the the constant reference to holiness in the many interventions of the Synod Fathers recently, the Pope recalled that this universal vocation “always rises up in the Church from the well-spring of the mystery of redemption”. For this reason, “today’s canonization”, he said, “is an eloquent confirmation of this mysterious saving reality”. And “this is true both for the mission ad Gentes and for the new evangelization in places with ancient Christian roots”. Thus “these new saints, different in origin, language, nationality and social condition, are united among themselves and with the whole People of God in the mystery of salvation of Christ the Redeemer”.

At the end of the Mass the Pope recited the prayer of the Angelus with the faithful gathered in the square for the Canonization, inviting them to turn to the “Virgin Mary, the One who is Queen of all Saints”.

Benedict XVI then turned his thoughts to Lourdes and the Grotto of the Apparitions of Our Lady which have been inundated by serious flooding of the Gave. Then recalling the World Mission Day, he entrusted to the Virgin “the missionaries — men and women, priests, religious and lay people — who sow the good seed of the Gospel in every part of the world”. Today the new saints, he explained, “usher us into Mission Week. In a special way let us sustain spiritually and materially those who proclaim Christ on the different continents”.