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## The concept of the new evangelization

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FR. STANISŁAW DYK

## ■ The concept of the new evangelization

Numerous studies have been and are still being written on the subject of the new evangelization. On the one hand, these studies show the rich reality concealed in the concept of the new evangelization. On the other, they contribute to a certain degree of ambiguity and imprecision in the understanding of the term. That is why what today bears the name of the new evangelization has hardly anything in common with it. According to Cardinal Kurt Koch, the new evangelization is a peculiar „conceptual jungle”. Paradoxically, all Church groups attempt to appropriate the new evangelization for themselves. The concept of the new evangelization resembles a big supermarket from which everyone chooses what they like and what confirms their views and actions. In this way, under the guise of this term, everyone wants to, as it were, smuggle one's own standpoint and push through one's own interests. Therefore, the new evangelization seems to be a term torn between being a „common phrase” and a „linguistic tautology”<sup>1</sup>. That is why some scholars conclude that „terminological problems blur” the concept of the new evangelization „and make it a preacher's catchphrase rather than a call for action”<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> R. Biel, *Kościół Wielkiej Soboty. Paschalna wizja Kościoła w ujęciu kardynała Kurta Kocha* (*The Church of the Holy Saturday. The Paschal Vision of the Church According to Cardinal Kurt Koch*), Tarnów 2012, p. 392.

<sup>2</sup> W. Śmigiel, *Specyfika i zadania nowej ewangelizacji* (*The Specificity and Objectives of the New Evangelization*), in: *Nowa ewangelizacja w nowej katechezie* (*The New Evangelization in the New Catechesis*), ed. P. Mąkosa, Rzeszów 2013, p. 22.

Therefore, it seems correct to state that „the lack of precision in defining the new evangelization inhibits its progress”<sup>3</sup>.

It is necessary, and even crucial, to make the concept of the new evangelization (as well as the preaching summons contained in it) exact and precise. Otherwise, there is a danger that contemporary ministry will remain on „positions won in the past”, without reflecting on the actions which could lead to the development of new preaching methods. However, a careful study of the Church documents makes it possible to define the essential nature of the new evangelization. In such an analysis, it is enough to focus on those statements concerning the new evangelization which include such phrases as: „especially”, „primarily”, „mainly” etc. These statements point to what constitutes structural elements of the new evangelization – its distinguishing features. Without them, the new evangelization loses its identity. It is these that facilitate the development of an unalterable backbone of the term „new evangelization”. This article focuses precisely on this issue. Of course, it provides merely an overview of the problems involved in such an analysis. The word „concept” used in the title is understood as „a guiding principle which determines the direction and goal of action”.

To begin with, it should be stated that the semantic range of the term „new evangelization” does not correspond to the actions which fall within the actual range of evangelization. This is because since the Synod of Bishops in 1974, which was devoted to evangelization in the modern world, and the Apostolic Adhortation of Pope Paul VI *Evangelii Nuntiandi*<sup>4</sup> evangelization has been understood very broadly and has been identified with apostleship and missionary work. In its general and full sense, evangelization is understood simply as the continuation of Christ’s mission and, consequently, as the Christianization of the world<sup>5</sup>. The new evangelization contains in itself some special, or to put it another way, precise aspect (or aspects) of evangelization. Otherwise, it would be merely evangelization and it would be pointless to call it the „new evangelization”.

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<sup>3</sup> J.L. Moens, *Na czym polega nowa ewangelizacja? (What is the New Evangelization?)*, in: *Nowa ewangelizacja. Kerygmaticzny impuls w Kościele (The New Evangelization. The Kerygmatic Impulse in the Church)*, Gubin 2013, p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Paul VI, „*Evangelii Nuntiandi*”. *Apostolic Exhortation of His Holiness Pope Paul VI to the Episcopate, to the Clergy and to All the Faithful of the Entire World* (abbreviated as EN).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. W. Przyczyna, *Teologia ewangelizacji (Theology of Evangelization)*, Kraków 1992, p. 26.

## I. The Call for the New Evangelization

It is generally known that the phrase „new evangelization” was first used by John Paul II in his homily during the mass celebrated in Nowa Huta on June 9<sup>th</sup> 1979, when he said: „we have received the sign that at the turn of the new century – into these new times and new conditions – the Gospel enters anew; that the new evangelization has begun – as if the second one, yet the same as the first”. The Pope did not specify how the new evangelization should be understood. However, he used the phrases „new times and new conditions”, which suggests new socio-cultural circumstances of evangelization. It is these that are important distinguishing features of the new evangelization.

Four years later, on March 9<sup>th</sup> 1983, in Port-au-Prince, during the meeting with the members of the Council of the Latin American Bishops’ Conference, John Paul II gave rise to an enormous excitement when he said that the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the evangelization of Latin America, which was to take place in 1992, would reach its full potential if everyone became involved in the new evangelization. He added that it should be understood „not as the second, but new in its enthusiasm, its methods and its expression”. At this point one can notice an important aspect of the „novelty” of the evangelization: new enthusiasm, methods and means of expression. „New enthusiasm” suggests that the contemporary Church should renew its missionary nature so that Christian communities would desire to evangelize more eagerly and dynamically. „New methods” require searching for new methods of apostleship. „New means of expression” point to the important aspect of inculturation, which is the adaptation of the Gospel to contemporary culture.

In 1990, in his encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio*: On the Permanent Validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate, John Paul II specified the concept of the „new evangelization” by differentiating it from the missionary evangelization (the first) and the pastoral one. For the Pope, the criterion for this tripartite division of evangelization is the addressee. In contrast to missionary evangelization (addressed to non-believers and the non-baptized) and pastoral one (addressed to believers), the new evangelization is addressed to former Christians, to the so-called neo-pagans, who to various extents abandoned their faith, and who lost „a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel”<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. John Paul II, „*Redemptoris Missio*”: *On the Permanent Validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate*, no. 33 (abbreviated as RM).

## II. Addressees of the New Evangelization

### 1. *The de-Christianized*

The new evangelization is first of all preaching the Gospel among societies which in the past converted to it and then underwent the process of laicization and secularization. According to John Paul II, this concerns the „situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel”<sup>7</sup>. Pope Benedict XVI uses similar words: „the ‘new evangelization’ designates pastoral outreach to those who no longer practice the Christian faith”<sup>8</sup>. Lineamenta for the Synod on the new evangelization<sup>9</sup> mention those who were „baptized [and now] lead totally un-Christian lives” (9). That is why they can be called „baptized pagans”. The above-mentioned observations indicate three characteristic features of the addressees of the new evangelization: lack of the living faith (a personal relationship with God), loss of the link with the Church and living outside the perspective of the Gospel. Therefore, these people live in a very similar way to non-believers. Hence, it is a form of apostasy which manifests itself either through atheism or religious indifference<sup>10</sup>.

Therefore, the addressees of the new evangelization are all those whose way of thinking and living is situated outside Christianity. In simple terms, de-Christianization is defined as moving away from the Church, losing or rejecting the faith transmitted by the previous generations. The new evangelization is thus evangelization in the new world which has been secularized and has lost its religious sensitivity and the sense of the sacred; it is a world where it seems that God has no place of His own. We are dealing here with the missionary environment defined by the remains of Christianity, such as customs, language or other elements of modern culture. From the psychological point of view, these addressees are much „harder” to deal with than those who have

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<sup>7</sup> Ibidem. Cf. John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation „Ecclesia in Europa” On Jesus Christ Alive in His Church – the Source of Hope for Europe*, no. 47 (abbreviated as EE).

<sup>8</sup> Benedict XVI, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation „Africae Munus”*, no. 160.

<sup>9</sup> Synod of Bishops XIII Ordinary General Assembly, *The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith. Lineamenta*, Vatican 2011 (abbreviated as Lineamenta).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. EN 55-56; Lineamenta 9.

never heard the Gospel. This is because they think they know Christianity, but they ceased to take interest in it, since the Christianity they know does not appeal to them<sup>11</sup>.

## 2. „Cultural” Christians (*without the living faith*)

The addressees of the new evangelization are also those who still consider themselves members of the Church, but they have not made their personal choice of the Christian faith and do not live in accordance with „the life of faith.” Their affiliation to the Church and connection with the Gospel are merely of a formal nature. In this case, Christianity is reduced to the level of culture or social or political involvement<sup>12</sup>. Consequently, participation in religious life is motivated mainly by factors which fall outside religion. An example of such a factor might be the desire to take the most important moments of one’s life, such as birth, marriage, death or the most „popular” religious celebrations, and „array” them as elements of the sphere of the sacred. Another example is the will to belong to a certain community. In his analysis of the religiosity of contemporary Polish people, Wojciech Sadłoń concludes: „Believers are mostly those who display signs of conformity and do not want to stand out from the majority. Being a believer in Poland is to some extent a result of adapting oneself to the surrounding environment”<sup>13</sup>.

John Paul II defines this type of „Christianity” as follows: „Many of the baptized live as if Christ did not exist: the gestures and signs of faith are repeated, especially in devotional practices, but they fail to correspond to a real acceptance of the content of the faith and fidelity to the person of Jesus”<sup>14</sup>. The addressees of the new evangelization are therefore those whose religiosity

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<sup>11</sup> A. Suquia, *Nowa Ewangelizacja: niektóre zadania i niebezpieczeństwa doby obecnej* (*The New Evangelization: Some Objectives and Dangers of the Present Time*), in: *Kolekcja „Communio”* („*Communio*” Collection), vol. 8, *Nowa Ewangelizacja* (*The New Evangelization*), Poznań 1993, p. 45.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Benedict XVI, *Apostolic Letter „Motu Proprio Data” „Porta Fidei” of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI for the Indiction of the Year of Faith*, no. 2; G. Ryś, *Nowa ewangelizacja dla przekazu wiary* (*The New Evangelization for the Transmission of Faith*), in: *Nowy człowiek w dziele nowej ewangelizacji* (*The New Man in the New Evangelization*), ed. G.W. Dryl, Kraków 2013, p. 25ff.

<sup>13</sup> W. Sadłoń, *Jak wierzą Polacy?* (*What Do Poles Believe in?*), in: *Wierzę w Syna Bożego. Program duszpasterski Kościoła w Polsce na lata 2013-2017* (*I Believe in the Son of God. The Pastoral Program of the Church in Poland for the Years 2013-2017*), Poznań 2012, p. 270.

<sup>14</sup> EE 47.

is empty, one might say even „atheistic,” because it is devoid of a relationship with the living God and lacks the fidelity to Jesus and His Gospel. In their case, Christianity has been simplified to the outward forms of religiosity and to a vaguely defined and barely binding religious feeling. According to the Pope, this form of „religiosity” leads to „various forms of agnosticism and practical atheism (which) are spreading and serve to widen the division between faith and life”<sup>15</sup>.

### 3. *Those who constitute the living body of the Church*

The addressees of the new evangelization are also those who believe and thus remain genuinely „inside” the Church and thus they constitute its living body. In this case, the new evangelization is concerned simply with animating and making their faith dynamic so that they could become zealous missionaries. What matters here is the spiritual growth of the Church, which will be able to evangelize both through the testimony of its existence and through the fervently direct transmission of the Gospel. This is because the condition for effective evangelization is the experience of one’s own faith and strengthening oneself in it<sup>16</sup>. John Paul II underlines that the condition for effective evangelization of those who moved away from Christ and the Church is to „remake the Christian fabric of the ecclesial community itself” who live among these people<sup>17</sup>. Therefore, the new evangelization should also be understood as the self-evangelization of the Church. That is why, following John Paul II’s encouragement, what should also be intensified in the era of the new evangelization are the evangelizing efforts inside, *ad intra* the Church (RM 34).

### 4. *Modern cultures*

The addressees of evangelization are not only individual people but also cultures, which was already pointed out by Pope Paul VI in his writings on

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<sup>15</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>16</sup> G. Augustin, *Drogi skutecznej ewangelizacji (Methods of Effective Evangelization)*, in: *Nowa ewangelizacja – impuls do ożywienia wiary (The New Evangelization – An Impulse for Faith Revival)*, Ząbki 2012, p. 139.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation „Christifideles Laici” of His Holiness John Paul II on the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World*, no. 34 (abbreviated as ChL).

evangelization<sup>18</sup>. Both in John Paul II's comments and in numerous Church documents which refer to the new evangelization, one can find statements on the necessity of „evangelizing culture” or „addressing cultures.” Pope Francis openly states: „It is imperative to evangelize cultures in order to inculturate the Gospel”<sup>19</sup>. Such a statement does not require additional comments. It is clear that in the process of evangelization, one should begin to dialogue with the culture in which the addressee of the evangelization lives. The Gospel is never transmitted to some abstract human being, but to specific people, living in a specific historical, geographical, civilizational, economic and social context. Evangelization does not reach people whose spirit is a „blank slate” (*tabula rasa*): „Man is never alone. He is shaped by the community which provides him with patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. This structure of forms of thinking and imagination is called culture”<sup>20</sup>.

### III. The Methods of the New Evangelization

According to John Paul II, the new evangelization is primarily a methodological renewal of the existing to present evangelization. The Church today needs new methods and new models of evangelization. The new evangelization ought to primarily be carried out in a new way in order to make a „new, creative synthesis between the Gospel and life” (Address to the Bishops of Scandinavia, 1989). The evangelization of the world must be constantly renewed and made dynamic in the same sense as the Church must always be renewed, enlivened and reformed. By her nature, the Church is *semper renovanda et reformanda*. The new methods of evangelization are also dependent on the new social and cultural context. Today, the Church needs other methods than it did in the era of the Christian community. This simply means that some of the existing methods of evangelization may have become out of date due to changes in the social and cultural context, while other methods only require renewal and implementation in a theologically correct way.

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. EN 18.

<sup>19</sup> Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation „Evangelii Gaudium” of the Holy Father Francis to the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World*, 2013, no. 69 (abbreviated as EG).

<sup>20</sup> J. Ratzinger, *W drodze do Jezusa Chrystusa (On the Way to Jesus Christ)*, Kraków 2004, p. 45ff.



Searching for answers concerning the new methods of evangelization, we must first answer the question of what the notion of „method” means. In its original sense, it means the way (*odós*) to achieve the goal (*metá*)<sup>21</sup>. Therefore, this is simply „the way to some goal”. In this case, it concerns the way to „achieving the goal of the new evangelization”. Searching for methods for the new evangelization, we must therefore start with getting to know the goal of the new evangelization.

The general goal of the New evangelization is consistent with the goal of evangelization in the broad sense of the term - it is the Christianization of the modern world<sup>22</sup>. In other words, this means contributing to the building of the Church as a kingdom of love, justice and peace, making Jesus Christ known, loved and imitated to the ends of the earth, while doing so only and always for the glory of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit<sup>23</sup>. In order to show the specificity of the new evangelization and thus design appropriate methods for it, we must point to its most basic objectives in detail.

The specific objective of the new evangelization is a result of its first recipient, meaning de-Christianized people or „cultural Christians”. The new evangelization is therefore the personal bonding with Christ and the Church of those baptized people who have stopped being convinced and consistent Christians. Benedict XVI recently reminded us of this objective of the new evangelization when he stated that the new evangelization addressed to de-Christianized people is „to foster in these people a new encounter with the Lord, for only He fills our lives with deep meaning and peace”<sup>24</sup>.

Another specific objective of the new evangelization is a person’s mature faith and ecclesiastical communities. Here, John Paul II speaks of „the formation of mature ecclesial communities”<sup>25</sup> leading to „the flowering of a clear and deep faith” in the hearts of men<sup>26</sup>. This objective is consistent and is associated

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<sup>21</sup> A.M. Triacca, *Metodologia (Methodology)*, in: *Dizionario di Omiletica*, a cura di M. Sodi, A.M. Triacca, Torino-Bergamo 1998, p. 929.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Deklaracja końcowa Specjalnego Zgromadzenia Synodu Biskupów poświęconego Europie*, 1991, „Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 1992 no. 1, p. 46.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter „Novo millennio ineunte”*, Rome 2001, no. 29 (abbreviated as NMI).

<sup>24</sup> Benedict XVI, *Homilia podczas Mszy św. na uroczyste rozpoczęcie XIII Zwyczajnego Zgromadzenia Synodu Biskupów (Homily during the Eucharistic Celebration of the XIII General Meeting of the Synod of Bishops)*, „Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 2012 no. 11, p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> ChL 34; cf. RM 32.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. ChL 34-35.

with yet another objective of the new evangelization. Here, both John Paul II<sup>27</sup> and Benedict XVI indicate the renewal of the Church itself, so that it may become a missionary Church. Renewal of faith leads to a renewed mission. Contemporary Evangelization will be „new in its zeal”. Benedict XVI in his apostolic letter *Ubicumque et semper* established the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization and stated: the task of the new evangelization „refers directly to its relations with the outside world (in terms of those staying away from the faith), but most of all presupposes a constant internal renewal, constantly changing roles, so to speak, when at times it must be evangelized and at other times it must evangelize”.

Finally, the new evangelization has as its goal the new inculturation of the Gospel in order to respond to the new cultural situation in which we live and to give contemporary culture a transcendent dimension so that the Gospel will influence the criteria of evaluation, the hierarchy of values and patterns of life<sup>28</sup>.

The above described addressees and, above all, the specific objectives of the New evangelization allow us to point to a few basic methods of evangelization. They are important structural elements (differentiators) of the new evangelization. Without them, it would have lost its identity. These methods can be described as the kerygmatic method, the method of the Church's missionary strategy, the method of reviving the faith of Church members and the method of inculturation.

### 1. *The Kerygmatic Method*

Both de-christianized and „cultural” Christians are included in the kerygmatic method. *The General Directory for Catechesis* clearly speaks of this method. Remembering those „who have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church” and those who only live their Christianity in an external way, the document states: „In this situation, the first proclamation and basic catechesis are the privileged option”<sup>29</sup>. This first proclamation is the kerygma in the strict sense of the term (hereafter

<sup>27</sup> Cf. for example ChL 34, RM 34; NMI 40.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Benedict XVI, *Apostolic Letter „Ubicumque et semper”*, Rome 2012; A. Lewek, *Nowa ewangelizacja w duchu Soboru Watykańskiego II (The New Evangelization in the Spirit of Vatican Council II)*, vol. 2, Katowice 1995, p. 62-63.

<sup>29</sup> Kongregacja ds. Duchowieństwa, *Dyrektorium Ogólne o Katechizacji (The Congregation for Matters of the Clergy, The General Directive on Catechesis)*, Poznań 1998, no. 58; cf. EE 46.

referred to simply as the kerygma). Pope Francis adds that „the first proclamation (...) should occupy a central place in the work of evangelization and every attempt to renew the Church”<sup>30</sup>. The Lineamenta precisely indicate this method of the new evangelization: „At the time, the expression «initial proclamation» was taken over and utilized in restructuring the process of introduction to the faith. Intended to be addressed to non-believers, namely, those who are indifferent to religion, initial proclamation has, generally speaking, the function of both proclaiming the Gospel and calling to conversion those who until now do not know Jesus Christ. Catechesis, distinct from the initial proclamation of the Gospel, promotes growth in this initial conversion and provides instruction in the faith to those who have converted, thus incorporating them into the Christian community” (no. 19).

In view of de-christianization, the situation of unbelief or in every missionary situation, the Church has only one answer. It is simply the kerygma, the quickest way to give birth to the faith. It is the kerygma that is evangelization in the biblical sense. St. Paul writes: „But how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach to them?” Literally, this means „if no one has preached the kerygma to them” (*choris keryssontos*) (Rom 10,14). „Thus, faith comes from what is heard” (Rom 10,17), where “what you hear” is precisely the kerygma<sup>31</sup>, which can be understood according to Jerzy Chmiel as „the very core of the Christian proclamation – a kind of *pars pro toto* – understood as the entire proclamation of the apostolic message”. St. Paul used this kerygmatic method, for example, with the Corinthians, directly proclaiming to them the Gospel of Jesus Crucified and Risen from the dead (cf. 1 Cor 2,1ff). At the same time, it was also the proclamation of the power of the Holy Spirit. According to St. Paul, that which saves man is „the foolishness” of the kerygma (1 Cor 1,21; cf. Acts 13,26).

The kerygmatic method is what essentially distinguishes the new evangelization from broader evangelization (or apostolate). In the challenge for a new evangelization, other general elements of evangelization remain in the background<sup>32</sup>. The kerygmatic method aims towards the goal (*metá*), which is the renewed (or first) birth of faith.

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<sup>30</sup> EG 164.

<sup>31</sup> R. Cantalamessa, *Wiara, która zwycięża świat (The Faith that Conquers the World)*, Kraków 2006, p. 17.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Cz. Parzyszek, *Treść pojęcia „nowa ewangelizacja” według Jana Pawła II (The Contents of the Idea of the „New Evangelization” according to John Paul II)*, „Kultura-Media-Teologia” („Culture-Media-Theology”) 2(2010) no. 2, p. 145.

## 2. *The Church's Missionary Method Strategy*

The first recipients of the new evangelization („former Christians”), meaning „those who do not consider themselves to be members of the Church”<sup>33</sup> and have abandoned their Christian practices are found outside the influence of ordinary pastoral ministry which is mostly centered around the parish. In a certain sense, therefore, they are found *ad extra* towards the Church, yet formally remain (as a result of their baptism) inside the Church. Since they are living outside the *sacrum*, we need to seek them out where they are – that is, in their world. In their case, we cannot expect them to make the first move – as if they are to go looking for the faithful, a priest, a shrine or the Church. We need to find the de-christianized, to track them down in their environment – on the street, in the workplace, in schools, in shops, in homes. And this is not just some one-time action, but there is consistency in this type of activity. A contemporary pastor can no longer just simply be „the guardian of the sanctuary” (who is sometimes only found in the sacristy), carrying out ministry that focuses on the temple and therefore he does not make a move beyond the shadow cast by the church tower. John Paul II spoke to the Polish bishops in 1993 during his *ad limina apostolorum* visit: the New evangelization in Poland today still means „real missionary ministry that does not wait passively but sets out to find the lost sheep”<sup>34</sup>.

In fact, the Church in Poland often faces a paradoxical situation, but it is favorable to the New evangelization. It sometimes happens that the de-christianized (despite severed ties with the Church) also appear in the parish office or take part in liturgical celebrations. The Church's missionary method strategy also relies on using these pastoral situations to Evangelize de-christianized people. We cannot forget that the participants in the liturgy are often „cultural” Christians who are also in need of Evangelizing their superficial Christianity. The missionary apostolate method includes these people as its priority recipients. The goal of the (*metâ*) toward which this method aims is to find the „lost sheep”.

## 3. *Reviving the Faith of the Christian Community Method*

The New evangelization needs the missionary Church that will not only have an Evangelization strategy worked out, but will also wish to Evangelize

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<sup>33</sup> RM 33.

<sup>34</sup> „Chrześcijanin w świecie” („The Christian in the World”) 23(1993) no. 1, p. 174.

with „new zeal”. This situation sets out another method for the New evangelization, whose goal (*meta*) is the renewal of the missionary nature of the Church. This in turn is achieved by strengthening the faith of Christian communities. Missionary activity flows from it „not only from the Lord’s command, but from the profound demands of God’s life in us”<sup>35</sup>. Hence, „the value of a missionary is above all because of *who he is*, and only afterwards because of what he *says or does*”<sup>36</sup>. Lack of enthusiasm for evangelization is, however, a sign of weakness of faith. Therefore, a major challenge for the new evangelization may be a crisis of faith in Christians and of the Church itself.

This method is concerned with the self-evangelization of the Church, thanks to which its members will gain an authentic, living and mature faith. We must deepen the faith of believers so that they will be able and desire to communicate that faith to others. The revival of faith occurs primarily through a personal encounter with the living, personal God. Hence, a fundamental aspect of the New evangelization’s method is to create the possibility of experiencing God. We should make the Church a Church that prays and adores God. Also, the very structures of the Church should be evangelized and formed in the spirit of Jesus, permeated by Him. The new evangelization for the Church itself is a kind of *kairos* – it is a time for its conversion and renewal. The point is that we do not allow transcendence to be darkened within the Church, to protect the community of believers from self-secularization and self-degradation in the Church<sup>37</sup>. The richness of the Catholic Church has many roads leading to the Christian experience. It mainly concerns the essential, constitutive elements of the Church’s life, which include the proclamation of the word of God, the liturgy and the Church community. And this is what needs to be renewed, made dynamic and implemented in a theologically correct way. The renewal of the Church, therefore, is to recover a living faith, which is born of the Word of God, and to give people the experience of transcendence, whether this be through renewed participation in the liturgy or through the experience of the Church as a communion. Some of these roads leading to the experience of God were distorted and are not implemented in

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<sup>35</sup> RM 11.

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem, no. 23. „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*”.

<sup>37</sup> G. Augustin, *Wprowadzenie (Introduction)*, in: *Nowa ewangelizacja. Impulsy do ożywienia wiary (The New Evangelization. Impulses to Enliven the Faith)*, Ząbki 2012, p. 10.

a theologically correct way. It must be said, therefore, that the new evangelization, *mutatis mutandis*, also means renewal of traditional evangelization. This simply means changing that which should be changed<sup>38</sup>.

#### 4. *The Inculturation Method*

The new evangelization must take into account the new cultural context of the modern world. A new culture that is the addressee of the new evangelization requires the process of a new inculturation of the Gospel. On the one hand this means taking into consideration the transmission of the Gospel under constantly changing cultural conditions that form a given person (to take into account their way of thinking, acting, evaluating). In other words, this is the adaptation of the message of the Gospel to the mentality of modern man – that is, to develop new way of expressing evangelization. We also need to add that the inexhaustible richness of the Gospel and the creative action of the Holy Spirit enable applying various new forms of expression, which facilitate the evangelization of culture.

On the other hand, this concerns the transformation of a given culture in the spirit of the Gospel – incarnating the Gospel into the current modern culture<sup>39</sup>, especially in the so-called First World culture<sup>40</sup>. This method has multiple arguments. According to John Paul II, the synthesis between culture and the Gospel (which is to enable the process of inculturation) is not only a requirement of culture, but also of the Gospel. „Faith that does not become culture is not faith that is fully adopted, internally considered and faithfully lived” (Address to UNESCO, Paris February 6, 1980). The goal of inculturation of the Gospel is to link and harmonize all the values and motivations, all of a person’s life and activities with an attitude of faith. A lack of such integration may mean that faith will be marginalized and will not have a major impact on a person’s life and behavior.

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. J. Wal, *Diakonia wspólnoty a przekaz wiary chrześcijańskiej* (*The Community Diaconate and the Transmission of the Christian Faith*), in: *Nowy człowiek w dziele nowej ewangelizacji* (*The New Man in the Work of the New Evangelization*), p. 177.

<sup>39</sup> EN 18.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. A. Lewek, *Nowa ewangelizacja w duchu Soboru Watykańskiego II* (*The New Evangelization in the Spirit of the Second Vatican Council*), vol. 2, p. 61, 81.

To sum up these reflections, it can be said that the essence of the new evangelization is primarily the use of four of the above mentioned methods to evangelize. These are not, of course, all of the methods used for the new evangelization, but the basic methods. We must also keep in mind that the new evangelization is a dynamic reality – it follows the changing cultural context in order to adapt the „new man” to the new methods and forms of communicating the Gospel. Also, we cannot forget that the New evangelization has never been a fixed, precise program of evangelization, but a call to methodological renewal, new creativity and a more fervent commitment to evangelization. One must also realize the diversity of contemporary challenges and evangelizing impulses<sup>41</sup>. Benedict XVI's Apostolic Letter *Motu Proprio Ubicumque et semper* (September 29, 2010) strongly underlines this by establishing the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization: „This variety of situations demands careful discernment; to speak of a «new evangelization» does not in fact mean that a single formula should be developed that would hold the same for all circumstances”<sup>42</sup>.

The implementation of the summons to the new evangelization, therefore, needs careful discernment in order to work out the concrete direction of evangelization. This discernment must be done at the level of local Churches. This is to be spiritual, pastoral and theological discernment. Spiritual discernment is primarily listening to the inspiration coming from the Holy Spirit, who always directs the process of evangelization. It is also understanding the challenges flowing from the modern world – a time to listen, understand and interpret. Pastoral discernment is an attempt to find new ways to reach modern man by renewed proclamation of the Gospel. Finally, theological discernment is to understand the essence of the Gospel, which ought to be proclaimed, and to understand the nature of the Church, which somehow forces evangelization (in this case it concerns the theological self-awareness of the Church)<sup>43</sup>. It is therefore difficult to work out a formula for the new evangelization of the Church throughout the world.

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<sup>41</sup> K. Pawlina, *Aktualny model ewangelizacji Kościoła w Polsce (The Current Model of Evangelization in the Church in Poland)*, in: *Ewangelizacja odpowiedzią Kościoła w Polsce na wyzwania współczesności (The Gospel Is the Church's Response to Modern Challenges)*, ed. W. Przygoda, E. Robek, Sandomierz 2011, p. 98.

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/apost\\_letters/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_apl\\_20100921\\_ubicumque-et-semper\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/apost_letters/documents/hf_ben-xvi_apl_20100921_ubicumque-et-semper_en.html) [Date read: 21.03.2014].

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Lineamenta 3-5.

## IDEA NOWEJ EWANGELIZACJI

### Streszczenie

Na temat nowej ewangelizacji powstało i nadal powstaje bardzo wiele różnego rodzaju opracowań. Dzieła te z jednej strony ukazują bogatą rzeczywistość, jaką kryje w sobie nowa ewangelizacja, z drugiej zaś powodują pewną niejasność, nieprecyzyjność w rozumieniu tego pojęcia. To z kolei nie pozwala dostrzec konkretnego wezwania, które kryje się w idei nowej ewangelizacji, a tym samym nie przyczynia się do odnowienia współczesnego apostołstwa. Autor opracowania stara się zatem wskazać na istotę nowej ewangelizacji – na jej zasadnicze elementy strukturalne. Biorąc pod uwagę adresatów oraz szczegółowe cele nowej ewangelizacji, dochodzi do wniosku, że nowa ewangelizacja polega przede wszystkim na realizacji czterech, zasadniczych metod ewangelizacji: metody kerygmatycznej, misyjnej strategii Kościoła, ożywienia wiary członków Kościoła oraz inkulturacji.

### **Key words:**

The New evangelization, the kerygmatic method, the Church's missionary strategy, reviving the faith of Church members, the inculturation.

### **Słowa kluczowe:**

nowa ewangelizacja, metoda kerygmatyczna, misyjna strategia Kościoła, ożywienie wiary członków Kościoła, inkulturacja.