

## Lay Evangelization – Unit 2 - Fr Peyton

We are looking again at lay evangelization partly because it is so important not only in the world today but in our lives.

There are immense spiritual graces awaiting us. As Christian Catholics we are called to Lay Evangelization and as Dominicans we are doubly called. Since its foundation, the Dominican Order has emphasized catechesis and evangelization. St. Dominic stressed the need for his followers to study the faith thoroughly so they could share it convincingly. St. Dominic even sold his books in order to give to the poor. As Catholics we are called by documents such as “Christifideles Laici (The Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People), Pope John Paul II” where the pope called on the laity to spread the Word of God. It is beautifully written.

So, what can we actually do and how to we do them? I propose the three main points below coupled with the real-world examples in discussion sheet 1.

### Lay Evangelization - Three Main Points

1. Pray - You will never convert someone through your effort alone”. You can talk until you lose your voice. God must do the conversion. Our words can only take effect if God is in the mix. God inspires us to say the right words. In music this is called a “hook”. A series of words or notes which strikes a chord in a person. They remember it forever. The most famous hook in rock and roll was the Beatles “I want to hold your hand”. We need to strike a chord in a person’s spiritual life.
2. Let God do the heavy lifting - People must use their free will and respond. We have an opportunity to get them on the road. I have never convinced anyone to go to confession, but Laurie and I have had rosary converts call us out of thin air and ask if we could talk them through how to make a confession.
3. Keep your big mouth shut – God will finish the work

Our involvement is necessary - Would it be presumptuous of me to assume most of those in this room if not all will be in heaven. But we can reach higher than that. Could we not want to bring one or two or more souls with us. Before we get too proud of ourselves what if I said that each one of us is only here because someone else prayed for us. Maybe a mother or father, maybe a priest at the pulpit, maybe a stranger that saw you in the distance. Wow. We might have been born into the faith by a great blessing but how did we hang on. That might make us think again. God created each one of us with free will. Why did we continue in the faith? Did we drop out or get weak then come back? Why?

Two of the most exciting historical conversions might be St. Peter and St. Paul. Both had someone else go to them. Even the chosen people did not get a direct apparition they had Moses bring them Gods commands.

According to John 1:40-42: Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus. He first found his own brother Simon and told him, “We have found the Messiah”. Then he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas”. Andrew actually participated in the calling of Peter.

Annianus also participated in the conversion of St Paul.

We can also participate in helping others. We will never convert someone through our effort alone. You can talk until you lose your voice. God must do the conversion. Our words can only take effect if God is in the mix. God inspires us to say the right words.

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God knows what is in a person’s heart. He knows their “hook”. We only need to turn their attention toward God.

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## Part I Lay Evangelization <first video>

Take aways from this video:

1. Pray that God uses you to witness.
2. Let God do the work.
3. Pray that you don't have a BIG mouth

Don't be afraid. God will never send you a situation that you cannot handle. He is a loving Father.

Now let's look at Fr Peyton, "the rosary priest". I call your attention to the three important steps that were mentioned above and in in the first discussion.

## Part II Lay Evangelization <second video >

Step 1 – He prays. After his sickness and cure he prays and sets a goal of 10 million souls.

Step 2 - He has no formal training as an evangelist. He just sets this goal and lets God do the heavy lifting. He offers only his effort. We could not convince a single soul to pray on our own. The persons soul must be moved to pray by God. The goal of 10 million families is not realized until he prays to God before the Blessed Sacrament.

Step 3 – He does not try to take prayer to the next level, he lets God continue the work. There is a next level to prayer. For example mass on Sunday, confession, communion etc.

There is much more on the full length video which I will leave to those interested. I will make a few comments and I mean no disrespect please!. Fr Peyton was the king of junk mail (20,000 letters to priests and bishops) and they were done on a typewriter. Only God could have moved souls based on a form letter. He was also a frontrunner in spam phone calls, making numerous phone calls to prominent and recognizable folks that could further the cause. He let God move the recipients. Imagine making a cold call to Bing Crosby and getting a "Yes" to making a commercial. This is God's hand, and surely not Fr Peytons.

There was a rancher in rural America, just this year, who was accustomed to seeing bald eagles off in the distance. They are truly beautiful birds. One day he says "hey God, I would one day like to see one of these birds up close. No sooner had he finished than he sees off in the distance an eagle fly up off his perch and come toward him. It landed carefully on his shoulder! This man had no plan to be a witness, but his story made national news and he witnessed to millions without ever intending to.

Franklin Gram – prayer only let God do the heavy lifting because only he knows what is in a persons heart

Hallow app – prayer only let God do the heavy lifting because only he knows what is in a persons heart

Closing Prayer

Eternal Father, if it be your will, allow me to carry the good news to one other person. Lest I be too conservative and not appreciate your true greatness and mercy, and in the words of Abraham, please forgive me, LORD, for daring to speak to you like this, but may I carry your word to two other people. Please again don't be angry, LORD, if I ask you further, but may I carry your word to ten other people. And again lord for the last time what if your mercy could spread through me to 1000 people, I pray you and thank you for your creation.