



***Come & See Year 5 –
Mission & Evangelisation***

“Go make disciples”

**Everyday
Evangelisation:
*Thinking about what
it means to share
our faith***



A two-part course for small groups

Everyday Evangelisation: *Thinking about what it means to share our faith*

What's it all about?

- **Advent 2009 marks the beginning of the fifth and final year of *Come & See*, a five year process for renewal which has taken place in the Diocese of Leeds.** The purpose of the process has been to stimulate reflection about what it means for the Church to be an evangelising community, and to create opportunities for spiritual and faith formation. If you want to see what has happened, or look at some of the resources, visit www.comeandsee.org.uk.
- During this fifth year the theme is '***Mission and Evangelisation***,' focusing on what it means for parishes, schools, groups and individuals to respond to the command of Jesus to '***Go make disciples***.' During this year the invitation is extended to everyone in our Diocese to form a '***Come & See***' group to carry forward, at local level, the sharing and passing on of our Catholic faith.
- ***Everyday Evangelisation: Thinking about what it means to share our faith*** is designed to help with this by offering a simple two part course through which people can reflect on evangelisation and consider how they might witness to and pass on their faith.

How it works?

- In this short course there are two parts, two sessions, which are self-explanatory from the sheets provided. Two dates need to be set and a venue arranged. The dates, time and place for the two meetings need to be publicised and someone, or a group of people, need to take responsibility for co-ordination.
- Each session should last an hour or so. If there is not enough time to get through all the material it can be carried over to the next session or an additional session added. Please feel free to use the material as you see fit, perhaps asking people to finish any remaining reflection at home before the second session.
- The relevant sheets for Part 1 or Part 2 need to be copied in advance, enough for each person. At the events, people should be welcomed, offered some refreshment, and then invited to gather in a comfortable way so that they can discuss and share together.
- Having read through the material the co-ordinator leads the group through the two sessions, perhaps with the help of others. There is a pause for sharing as indicated. Everyone's view should be valued and the emphasis is on listening rather than debating. At the end of each session there are summary questions leading towards resolutions to be carried forward.

"There is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know Him and to speak to others of our friendship with Him." (Pope Benedict XVI, April 2005)

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Part 1 – Getting Started

Introduction

The co-ordinator gathers everyone together, distributes the sheets for the session, and begins by inviting everyone to pray together the opening prayer:

***God our heavenly Father, in Jesus your Son
you have shown us how much you love us.
He invited his first disciples to “come and see,”
to step out in faith and embrace His way, His truth and His life.
Grant that we, the Church of the Diocese of Leeds,
may be open to the Holy Spirit as
we seek renewal in our Christian living.
Refresh our hearts and minds.
Give us new vision and confidence.
Bless all that we do to build your kingdom in our time and place.
We ask this Father, through your Son, in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen***

Everyone is welcomed and the following introduction is read aloud:

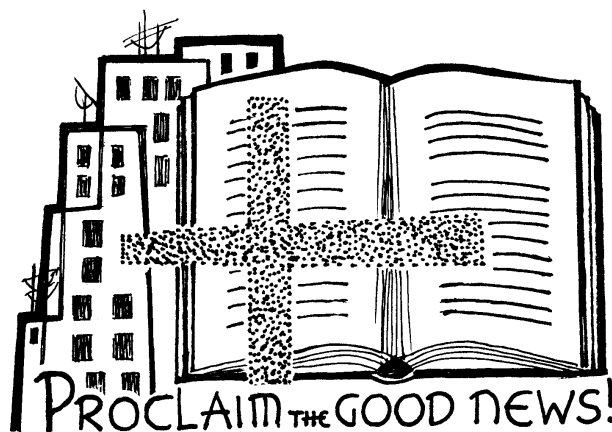
- **Advent 2009 marks the beginning of the fifth and final year of *Come & See*, a five year process for renewal which has taken place in our Diocese of Leeds.** The purpose of the process has been to stimulate reflection about what it means for the Church to be an evangelising community, and to create opportunities for spiritual and faith formation.
- During this fifth year the theme is ***‘Mission and Evangelisation,’*** focusing on what it means for parishes, schools, groups and individuals to respond to the command of Jesus to ***‘Go make disciples.’*** During this year the invitation is extended to everyone in our Diocese to form a ***‘Come & See’*** group to carry forward at local level the sharing and passing on of our Catholic faith.
- This course, ***‘Everyday Evangelisation’*** invites us to think about what it means to share our faith. It is designed to help us reflect on evangelisation and consider how we might witness to and pass on our faith.



The co-ordinator, or another, reads aloud the following text and quotations:

- Listen to these words from the First Letter of St Peter in the New Testament: *“Always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have.” 1Peter3:15*
- Again, listen to this quotation from Pope Paul VI writing about evangelisation in 1975: *“Evangelising is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelise.” (Apostolic Exhortation ‘Proclaiming the Gospel’ - Evangelii Nuntiandi, 14)*
- To evangelise is to announce the Good News of Jesus, both in words and in deeds. So the starting point for evangelisation is our relationship with Him. It’s about proclaiming our faith in Him, by living it out in service of others and in witness before the world. We are called to share the story of Jesus from our own perspective and then invite others to know and serve Him too. This first session is designed to give both individuals and communities practical ideas about how they can share and live out their faith in Jesus in everyday life. More suggestions will be presented in part 2.

The co-ordinator, or another, leads the group through the following three sections, announcing the title, reading the statements or suggestions. Those in the group are invited to share their reflections and someone makes a note of the comments and ideas.



We are going to reflect together on three aspects of **Everyday Evangelisation**. Please share your thoughts and ideas at the appropriate time:

1. What is Everyday Evangelisation?

- ❖ Everyday evangelisation is everyone’s mission. By virtue of our Baptism, we are all called to share our faith and put it into practice.
- ❖ Everyday evangelisation is a way of life. It takes place at any time, in any place, under any circumstance.
- ❖ Everyday evangelisation reaches out to everyone and all situations. It included words and actions and no one is excluded.
- ❖ Everyday evangelisation means deepening our own prayer and spiritual life. It involves growing in personal commitment to understanding more about the Catholic faith.
- ❖ Everyday evangelisation also addresses the social structures and communities that we find ourselves in: *“...evangelising means bringing the Good News into all strata of humanity... transforming humanity from within and making it new.” (EN 18).*

In the light of these statements, we can look at the following questions:

- What strikes you about the points above?
- What is challenging and why?

- How can we support each other in making them come alive and putting them into practice?

Please share your thoughts, reflections and ideas.

2. Everyday Evangelisation in the Home

Whether we live alone or with others, our home is the 'domestic Church.' Sharing our faith at home might include:

- ❖ Praying grace before and after meals
- ❖ Proudly displaying symbols of our faith
- ❖ Supporting charitable work (for example, *Family Fast Days*)
- ❖ Having a family calendar with the anniversary dates of reception of the Sacraments: Baptism, First Holy Communion, Marriage
- ❖ Establishing family rituals based on the Church year
- ❖ Celebrating Church feast days, like the Feast of St Peter and St Paul, and your family feast days, like the days of the saints you're named after
- ❖ Reading together from the Bible
- ❖ Discussing the morality of a TV programme or issues raised by news items



In the light of these suggestions, we can look at the following questions:

- Is there anything else you would add to the list?
- What is challenging and why?
- How can we support each other in making these suggestions come alive and putting them into practice?

Please share your thoughts, reflections and ideas.

3. Everyday Evangelisation in the Parish

How can we share and express our faith in our parish community. Here are some suggestions:

- ❖ Be gracious in the car park
- ❖ Periodically sit in a different place in church and exchange names with those around you

- ❖ Send a card to the newly baptised or confirmed
- ❖ Pray for parish leaders and for each other
- ❖ Get involved in events and activities, if only on a small scale (liturgical, spiritual, ecumenical, social, charitable, catechetical, practical outreach)
- ❖ Invite friends who aren't Catholic to parish events
- ❖ If possible, keep the Church open and encourage people to come in to pray and find peace and quiet in God's presence
- ❖ Emphasise welcome: have welcoming notices outside and inside the Church; have a visitors' book; provide information about the parish, local Catholic schools, the Catholic faith, and spirituality
- ❖ Encourage people to pray: design a leaflet guiding people in how to pray with reference to the imagery, statues and devotional aspects of your Church



In the light of these suggestions, we can look at the following questions:

- Is there anything else you would add to the list?
- What is challenging and why?
- How can we support each other in making these suggestions come alive and putting them into practice?

Please share your thoughts, reflections and ideas.

Summary Questions & Possible Resolutions

1. What are the significant points that have come from your sharing?
2. Are there some ideas that you think could be taken forward and given practical expression? If so, make a note of these. Try and identify a way of carrying them forward.
3. Are there people in the group who would like to form a local **Come & See** group to continue working together to promote spirituality, catechesis and evangelisation? If so, please contact Fr John Wilson (0113-2618001 or john.wilson@dioceseofleeds.org.uk) or Josephine Stow (0113 – 2618057 or Josephine.stow@dioceseofleeds.org.uk) who will be able to give help with this.

Thank you to everyone for coming. Part 2 will focus on: Everyday evangelisation in the work place, through social justice, and in all situations.

The session ends with the following prayer:

**God our loving Father, you made us your children in baptism.
Pour out on us afresh the gifts of your Holy Spirit.
May your will be done in all things.
Help us as a Diocese to know the paths we must follow
so as to build up your kingdom.
Teach us to grow in faith, to encourage one another
with words of hope, and to care for your family with love.
Help us to bear witness to the Good News
and be faithful followers of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.
Amen**

This material is based on a resource produced by CASE, the Catholic Agency to Support Evangelisation. There are numerous other resources that can support you as you evangelise, including websites, printed resources, groups and communities. To find out more see: www.caseresources.org.uk. For a jargon free introduction to Catholicism see: www.life4seekers.org.uk

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Part 2 – Moving Forward

Introduction

The co-ordinator gathers everyone together, distributes the sheets for this session (and the previous session for anyone who was not there), and begins by inviting everyone to pray together the opening prayer:

***God our heavenly Father, in Jesus your Son
you have shown us how much you love us.
He invited his first disciples to “come and see,”
to step out in faith and embrace His way, His truth and His life.
Grant that we, the Church of the Diocese of Leeds,
may be open to the Holy Spirit as
we seek renewal in our Christian living.
Refresh our hearts and minds.
Give us new vision and confidence.
Bless all that we do to build your kingdom in our time and place.
We ask this Father, through your Son, in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen***

Everyone is welcomed and the following introduction is read aloud:

- This short course, ‘**Everyday Evangelisation**’ invites us to think about what it means to share our faith. It is designed to help us reflect on evangelisation and consider how we might witness to and pass on our faith.
- In the first session we reflected on different aspects of Everyday Evangelisation: what it is; evangelisation in the home and in the parish. In this session we will look at Everyday Evangelisation in the work place, through social justice, and in all situations.

The co-ordinator, or another, leads the group through the following three sections, announcing the title, reading the statements or suggestions. Those in the group are invited to share their reflections and someone makes a note of the comments and ideas.



We are going to reflect together on three aspects of **Everyday Evangelisation**. Please share your thoughts and ideas at the appropriate time:

1. Everyday Evangelisation in the Work place

Consider these suggestions:

- ❖ Transact all business dealings honestly
- ❖ Respect others' religious beliefs
- ❖ Pray before making decisions
- ❖ Offer to pray for a co-worker who has shared some personal concerns
- ❖ Be ready to talk about the part Jesus plays in your life, and to be open about your Catholic faith (wear your Ash Wednesday ashes to work for example)
- ❖ Spend time with co-workers who share your Christian beliefs. Look for opportunities to pray together



In the light of these suggestions, we can look at the following questions:

- Is there anything else you would add to the list?
- What is challenging and why?
- How can we support each other in making these suggestions come alive and putting them into practice?

Please share your thoughts, reflections and ideas.

2. Everyday Evangelisation through Social Justice

Consider these suggestions:

- ❖ Stay informed about the causes of poverty, war and injustice: log on to www.justice-and-peace.org.uk for links to organisations working on these issues. Bring this into prayer
- ❖ Get involved: Is there a Justice and Peace, CAFOD or Pax Christi group in your parish you could join? Find a way to evangelise through action, putting the Gospel into practice.
- ❖ Witness by the way you live: log on to www.livesimply.org.uk for simple steps you can take to live in a way that does justice to the poor and respects God's creation
- ❖ Study and explore the Church's tradition of teaching on social justice

In the light of these suggestions, we can look at the following questions:

- Is there anything else you would add to the list?
- What is challenging and why?



- How can we support each other in making these suggestions come alive and putting them into practice?

Please share your thoughts, reflections and ideas.

3. Everyday Evangelisation in all Situations

Consider these suggestions:

- ❖ Respond with 'Thank God' when someone shares good news with you
- ❖ Wear a cross or other symbol of your faith
- ❖ Be ready for opportunities to share a story of how God works in your life
- ❖ Ask people to pray for your intentions
- ❖ Invite to church those who have no faith community
- ❖ Make the sign of the cross when dining out
- ❖ Share a smile and personal greeting
- ❖ Share with neighbours about your parish
- ❖ Without being a nuisance or a litter bug, leave religious materials in unexpected places



Ps. 134 (133) :3

In the light of these suggestions, we can look at the following questions:

- Is there anything else you would add to the list?
- What is challenging and why?
- How can we support each other in making these suggestions come alive and putting them into practice?

Please share your thoughts, reflections and ideas.

Some Final Thoughts

- ❖ **Everyday evangelisation means trusting in the Holy Spirit:** Just as the Holy Spirit empowered the early Church to share the Good News about Jesus, He remains the '*principal agent of evangelisation*' (EN75), and He will inspire us with the right words at the right time.
- ❖ **Everyday evangelisation means being courageous:** Don't get discouraged when challenges come - sometimes we are simply sowing a seed that may not come to fruition until years later. Scatter the seed and leave the rest to God.

- ❖ **Everyday evangelisation means remembering that Jesus is faithful:** Jesus said: *'If anyone declares himself for me in the presence of human beings, the Son of man will declare Himself for him in the presence of God's angels.'* (Luke 12:8)

Please share your thoughts and reflections

Profiles of Everyday Evangelists

- ❖ **Sharing faith through actions** – Cathy says: *'As a member of the St Vincent de Paul Society I try to proclaim the Good News through my actions, especially by helping out at the local soup kitchen.'*
- ❖ **Prayerfully proclaiming the Word** - Ray says: *'My Christian faith strengthens me in my work in hospice care. I will talk about my faith with colleagues and I am open to pray with them if they want me to.'*
- ❖ **Inviting others to church** – Vivien says: *'I'm so glad a friend of mine invited me to attend church. It really changed my life. I've been a Catholic for seven years now and have several times invited people to come with me to a local prayer group.'*
- ❖ **Wearing visible signs** – Richard says: *'I wear a cross on my lapel as an outward sign of my faith. People sometimes comment on it which gives me a chance to say something about my Christian belief.'*



Please share your thoughts and reflections

Summary Questions & Possible Resolutions

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2. Are there some ideas that you think could be taken forward and given practical expression? If so, make a note of these. Try and identify a way of carrying them forward.
3. Are there people in the group who would like to form a local **Come & See** group to continue working together to promote spirituality, catechesis and evangelisation? If so, please contact Fr John Wilson (0113-2618001 or john.wilson@dioceseofleeds.org.uk) or Josephine Stow (0113 – 2618057 or Josephine.stow@dioceseofleeds.org.uk) who will be able to give help with this.

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