



What we are *missing*
about the ***spiritually lost***
marriage prep couple



WHAT WE AREN'T MISSING

- 1.They don't choose to live by Catholic morality.
- 2.They don't understand or believe Catholic teaching.
- 3.They generally aren't seeking marriage in the Church for the "right reasons".





WHAT WE ARE MISSING

1. We think they should “know better” or have intentionally chosen to reject our morality.
2. We believe that if they knew Catholic teaching better it would lead them to act differently.
3. We hope they will come to the “right reasons” for being married in the Church through catechesis.



CHRISTENDOM AGE

The Church is
respected and has
great influence

Majority of people
operate out of
fundamentally
christian principles

“Maintain what is won”

APOSTOLIC AGE

Society is openly
hostile to the Church

Majority of people
operate out of
fundamentally
secular principles

“Missionary outreach
is highest priority”

The reason so much of the Church's moral teaching falls on deaf ears in our time is because it makes no sense according to the ruling vision of the society.

As long as that vision holds sway in an individual mind, teaching about moral truth (except where Christian moral precepts line up with those of the ruling vision) will be ineffective and will produce either **bewilderment or anger.**"



FAITH IN “PROGRESS”



FAITH IN PROGRESS

... faith in the ineluctable march of
humanity on an ascent to an ever better
and happier state of being.



DENIAL OF "THE FALL"



DENIAL OF THE FALL

Having discounted evil in each human heart and having little time for the idea of personal evil in fallen angelic beings, the progressive vision still needs to identify a source for the prevalence of active evil in the world.



DENIAL OF THE FALL

That source has always been found in a particular group of people who have been deemed to stand athwart the march of human progress. It might be the aristocracy, or the Jews, or the Catholics ...

Having relegated demons to the nursery, every utopian progressive vision finds itself constrained to demonize some portion of fellow humans.



MARGINALIZATION OF GOD



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We are not interested in religion as an
account of reality;
it is rather something that enhances
our experience and helps us deal with
the stress of existence.

We are not so much seeking a Lord
as looking for a therapist.



INTOXICATION WITH THE “SEEN” WORLD



THE "SEEN" ONLY


... because we are immortal souls created to dance with the living God, called to an eternal destiny that won't stop haunting us, it is natural under such a vision of smallness that we fall into creeping despair and attempt to medicate our misery by taking huge doses of the true opiate of the masses...
electronic entertainment.



FREEDOM TO CHOOSE AS THE BASIS OF OUR
DIGNITY AND HIGHEST VALUE

CONSUMER CONTENTMENT

ETC. ETC. ETC.



Instead of seeming to impose new obligations, they should appear as people who wish to share their joy, who point to a horizon of beauty and who invite others to a delicious banquet.



It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but by **attraction**.

Joy of the Gospel #14



STAGE 1 - WITNESS

Pre-Evangelization

Witness amongst people of the new and Christian way of being and living, including dialogue and charity. ([47]-[48] GDC). By word and deed.

STAGE 2 - PROCLAIM

Initial Evangelization

First or primary (explicit) proclamation of the Gospel (the Kerygma) and the call to conversion. ([47]-[48], [51], [61] GDC)

STAGE 3 - CONVERT

Initial Conversion

“Initial” conversion to Jesus Christ and becoming His disciple. Involves a change of life (metanoia), a profound transformation of mind and heart, and a “permanent commitment” to think, judge, and live like Christ. ([53], [55]-[56] GDC)



STAGE 4 - CATECHESIZE

Initiatory Catechesis

- “[I]nitial catechetical activity for those who choose the Gospel and for those who need to complete or modify their initiation.” ([49] GDC)
- Conversion as pre-condition of fruitful catechesis. ([61]-[62] GDC)
- Characteristics: (1) A comprehensive and systematic formation in the faith; (2) An apprenticeship of the entire Christian life; (3) A “complete Christian initiation” which promotes an authentic following of Christ; (4) A basic and essential formation centered on what constitutes the nucleus of Christian experience. ([67] GDC)

STAGE 5 - ADHERE

Adherence

- Adhering to Christ. Continuing and Life-long conversion. Grow and change from child into the “perfect man”, to maturity in the fullness of Christ. ([56] GDC)
- Led by the Spirit, progressing incrementally from purgative way of beginners, to illuminative way of proficient, to unitive way of the perfect.
- Growing in theological and cardinal (and other) virtues. Avoiding sin, removing vices, detachment & proper stewardship of material possessions. Cruciformity. Universal call to holiness.
- Abiding in and with Christ daily in His Word and in prayer. Loving and receiving frequently the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist (source & summit). Devoted to our Lady.
- Evidenced by good works & fruits of the Spirit, especially love of God, Church and neighbor. A person of the Beatitudes.

Many times we assume we should begin here...



Witness >>

Proclaim >>

Conversion >>

Catechesis >>

Adherence >>

Form >>

Unconverted (Missionary Activity)

Discipleship (Pastoral Activity)



When in fact the couple needs...



CONVERSION

Do not conform yourselves to this age,
but be **transformed**
by **the renewal of your mind**

Romans 12:2



CONVERSION

... what is needed is the sort of intellectual life that was characteristic of the Church in her early centuries, a life possessed to some degree by **every Christian**.

It is not simply or primarily a matter of college degrees but of the conversion of the mind to a Christian vision of reality and of readiness to live out the ramifications of that vision.



CONVERSION

Those who were brought into the Church in apostolic times **did more** than embrace a set of moral principles or doctrinal statements.

There was a need for a profound conversion of mind and imagination such as **they saw everything differently.**



THIS “CHRISTIAN VISION”
IS THE GOSPEL

Evangelization is the
proclamation and invitation into
the true vision of reality (Gospel)

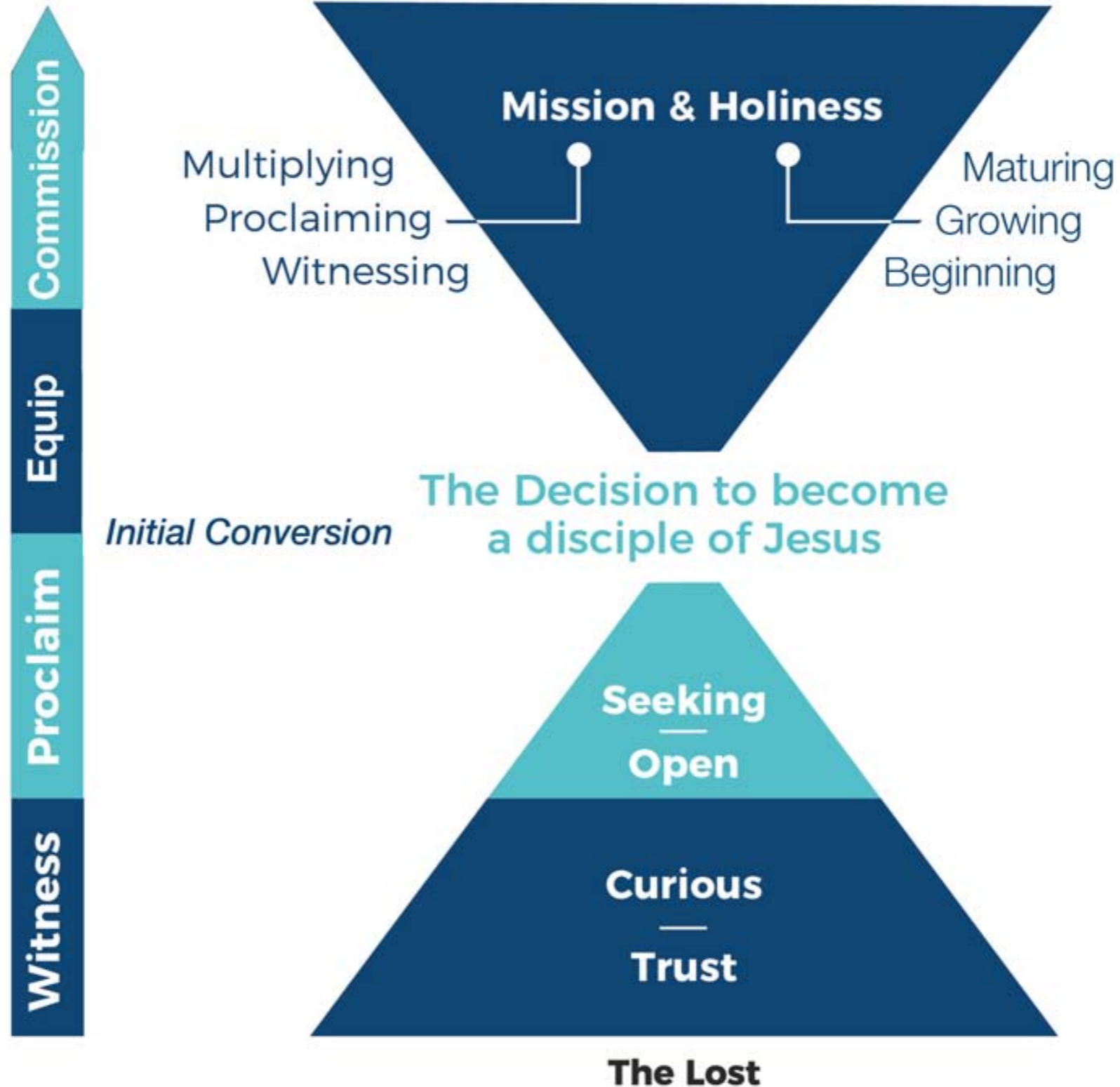


LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION



HOW TO SEE REAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE COUPLE

Intentional Accompaniment Model





WHERE ARE THEY?

Do they have trust built?

indicators:

positive association
with Church, Christian,
or Jesus.



Tell me about your experience with the Church

*Are you friends with anyone you would say
is a devout Catholic?*



WHERE ARE THEY?

**Are they curious about
Jesus or the faith?**

indicators:

- desire to know more
- intrigued by Jesus or Christian things
- not open to change yet...

*Have you participated in a bible study or
program that teaches the faith recently?
Have you gone to any "theology on taps" or
other Church events recently?*





WHERE ARE THEY?

Are they open to changing their life?

indicators:

- acknowledgement of openness to change
- can be triggered by major life events

*... Oh that's great you've been in _____ study,
what impact has it had on you would you say?*

*What role would you say Jesus plays in
your life?*



The Relationships Diagram



Outside
of my life



Part
of my life



Center
of my life



Outside
of my life



Part
of my life



Center
of my life



How to build **TRUST**

Delight in them

Avoid defensiveness and judgement

Make and keep promises

Listen to their story

How to create **CURIOSITY**

Speak the name of Jesus

Ask questions about their beliefs

Tell stories - Jesus stories

Match their level of curiosity

AVOID apologetics, focus on Jesus

TESTIMONY!!!

How to create **OPENNESS**

Intercession

Break the silence

Ask thought provoking questions

“connect the dots” for them

Ask for a sign

Pray with them

What to do with openness?

Explicit proclamation of the Gospel

Invitation to respond



LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION