



# Participant Guide



Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

## **An Evangelizing Community**

"THE CHURCH WHICH 'GOES FORTH' IS A COMMUNITY OF MISSIONARY DISCIPLES WHO..." (EG, 24)

TAKE THE 1ST STEP	GET INVOLVED	ACCOMPANY	BEAR FRUIT	REJOICE
Boldly takes the initiative, goes out to others, seeks those who have fallen away, stands at the crossroads and welcomes the outcast.	With an endless desire to show mercy bridges all gaps and does this with humility, embraces human life, and engages those who are suffering in our midst.	Stands by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be.	Does not continue "business as usual" because always concerned with fruit. Instead seeks new and innovative ways to share the Gospel and reach out to others.	Is filled with joy; celebrates every small victory, every step forward in the work of evangelization.



# What is a Missionary Disciple?

A missionary disciple is a person who knows and loves God and has a personal relationship with Jesus, who is inspired by the Holy Spirit to love others and seeks to share that love and inspiration with every person through action and word.

A missionary disciple knows the love of Jesus and seeks to imitate Him and serve the mission!

#### Missionary Disciples:

- nurture a relationship with Jesus Christ they are in love with Jesus.
- are sent out proclaim the Good News they tell their stories.
- draw others to an encounter of Jesus Christ and beget other disciples.
- creatively cooperate with grace and exhibit a posture of joy.

We find profound and authentic joy in our Christian lives when we align with God's heart and will, and this joy is contagious. Joy in evangelization is the action of the Holy Spirit! Pope Francis writes in the Joy of the Gospel, "An evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral! Let us recover and deepen our enthusiasm, that 'delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing'" (EG,10).

The Joy of the Gospel, No. 120

"In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients...The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization."



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## A Posture of Joy

Think for a moment of those people in your life who, in their core, exhibit a sense of joy. Their demeanor is different. It is welcoming and inviting. It is ennobling and attractive. It is captivating and curious.

A joyful posture powerfully reveals the precious face of God to others, especially in the midst of fear, vulnerability, and uncertainty. The joyful presence is humble yet confident, and feeds the hungry soul that yearns for something more. The joy that comes from a relationship with Christ is simple, real, and life-changing. It exhibits a child-like trust that rises above all limitations and barriers. The joyful heart flows from the person who is fully alive.

How do we maintain a joyful posture?

- Stay connected to our source (who is Christ).
- Integrate prayer into our day-to-day activities.
- Spend quiet time with Jesus in meditation and adoration.
- Prayerfully read the Sacred Scriptures.
- Use our gifts and talents to serve others and God.
- Don't take ourselves too seriously.
- Take seriously the important work of play and imagination in our walk with Christ.

Play involves cooperating with God's grace and sharing in the life of Christ. Using imagination in our Christian walk involves creatively being open to the Holy Spirit's action in your life. Imagination involves hopeful dreaming through the lens of the love of God.





In his book, *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul* by Dr. Stuart Brown, writes, "The opposite of play is not work. The opposite of play is depression. Play helps deal with difficulties, provides a sense of expansiveness, promotes a mastery of our craft, and is an essential part of the creative process. Most important, true play that comes from our own inner needs and desires is the only path to finding lasting joy and satisfaction in our work. In the long run, work does not work without play." Similarly, our work as missionary disciples must be open to the playful creativity of the Holy Spirit.

# Sharing the Good News

WHAT IS THE KERYGMA?

Our mission as disciples is to draw people into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. This is the command of the Great Commission (Mt. 28). We are heralds of the GOOD NEWS (Kerygma).

#### LOVE CREATES

We are created in God's image and likeness, made in love, by love, to share love.

#### SIN BREAKS

Sin severs the relationships we share and distorts truth leaving us restlessly wandering in illusion and fractured. Humanity needs to be saved.

#### JESUS CHRIST REDEEMS & RENEWS

Jesus Christ redeems mankind and calls us back to a loving relationship with him and the Father. Through the Holy Spirit He lovingly pulls us from the muck of sin.

#### WE RETURN TO LOVE

Renewed as Christians, we change our ways to better align with who God is calling us to be. We are called to new life with God and a relationship with Jesus Christ. As missionary disciples, we must passionately and joyfully share this news with those longing to hear.

Our good news is that God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life (John 3:16). Jesus is our good news! In a relationship with Jesus, who is God with us, we come to understand who we are as God's beloved in the world.



WE ARE CALLED TO USE OUR GIFTS TO SHARE (IN WORD AND DEED) THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST!

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### What is a Charism?

A charism is a gift (spiritual or natural) or grace, given by God to each at Baptism and strengthened by the Sacraments.

- Each person has at least one, some have more.
- Charisms are used to serve God and are used for others.
- Charisms have supernatural characteristics, for the giver and the receiver.

Throughout this experience we use the words charisms, graces, and gifts interchangeably.

Discerning these gifts and how God is calling you to use them is a life-long process of discovery that leads to incredible fulfillment. Given changing circumstances, our own maturity and growth, and encountering Christ in other people, these graces may rise to the surface in our lives a little differently at certain times. We must be open to how the Holy Spirit is moving within us and calling us to holiness.

"Charisms are not an inheritance, safely secured and entrusted to a small group for safekeeping; rather they are gifts of the Spirit integrated into the body of the Church, drawn to the center which is Christ and then channeled into an evangelizing impulse." (The Joy of the Gospel, No. 130)



#### **Recognizing your Charisms**

- YEARNING: I am naturally drawn to...
- RAPID LEARNING: I pick up these kinds of activities quickly...
- "FLOW": I feel "in the zone" when doing these things...time just flies by...
- GLIMPSES OF EXCELLENCE: I sometimes wonder, "How did I do that?" when I...
- SATISFACTION: In some activities I never seem to tire, and am anxious to do them again.

# The Perfection of Imperfection

AN HONEST LOOK AT THE HUMAN CONDITION OF MESSINESS
IN LIGHT OF THE EXQUISITE PLAN OF A PERFECT GOD
- DOUG TOOKE -

1) As imperfect missionary disciples, called by the Holy Spirit, we must embrace the perfect will of God. How do you understand this in your life?
2) "Holiness is letting grace and mercy flow through us" When have you encountered this in your life? Can you share a story?
3) Orthopraxy is "right doing" or "right living". Why is this important as we consider our gifts?
4) "The perfect God moves through the imperfect us." How does this influence your understanding of your gifts?

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# Called by the Spirit Discernment Cycle

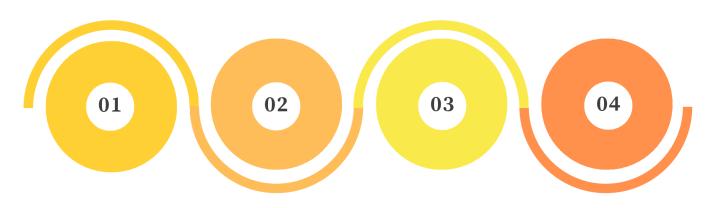
RECOGNIZING AND STIRRING UP YOUR GIFTS

Step 2

Gifts Inventory with prayerful guidance through the Holy Spirit

#### Step 4

Missionary action using our gifts to build God's kingdom



#### Step 1

Intentional prayer, contemplation, active listening and sacred surrender

#### Step 3

Process of accompaniment, discipling and focused group reflection

How do you see the world? How do you understand your calling to use your gifts to serve God and others?

# Celebrate What is Right with the World

"OUR VISION CONTROLS OUR PERCEPTION,
AND OUR PERCEPTION BECOMES OUR REALITY."
- DEWITT JONES -

1) What was one of your favorite quotes, message, or images in the video? Why?
2) What is Dewitt Jones telling us we need to do with our gifts and why?
3) "Put on the lens of celebration!" How can you do that more in your life?
4) Who is someone that inspires you to celebrate what's right in the world? How is their passion contagious?

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# Considering your Gifts Categories

"Every good tree bears good fruit. By their fruits you will know them." (Matthew 7: 17, 20)



ROOTS - Those whose gifts are like the roots of the tree help ground and structure a community. They focus on organizing people to accomplish a task. Without the grounded roots, the entire tree could be in jeopardy. Similarly, without the gifts of those in this category, those with other gifts could not flourish.

Administration, Giving, Leadership, Service, Discernment, Shepherding

BRANCHES - Those whose gifts are like branches that stretch out from the tree base reach out and extend to reveal God and the good news of the Gospel to a world longing to hear it. They seek opportunities to share the good news far and wide. The branches can reach quite a distance out, but always stay connected to the base of the tree. The base of the tree, like Christ, is the source of life. Detached, the branches wither and die. The message of the Good News always extends from the person of Jesus.

Digital Media, Evangelism, Prophecy, Teaching, Wisdom, Knowledge, Hospitality

LEAVES - Those whose gifts are like the leaves on a tree model a way of life that energizes and reveals the face of God and encourages the faithful to cling tightly to Christ when the counter-cultural winds blow through. Just as various leaves help identify the variety of tree, those with these gifts give a face to Christ in the world through their witness and example.

Global and Cultural Engagement, Peacemaking, Voluntary Poverty, Faith, Craftsmanship, Musicianship, Writing

WATER - Those whose gifts are like the water that hydrates the tree shower down God's compassion, love and healing in times of brokenness. They provide help, comfort, assurance and warmth in times of challenge and need. They help restore and renew.

Healing, Intercession, Mercy, Helping, Encouragement





## Storytelling

SHARING AND AFFIRMING

Think of a moment in your life when:

- You used your gifts to serve God or others.
- You found an activity meaningful.
- You felt nurtured and impassioned to continue to make a difference.

Jot some brief notes down about your experience. We will ask you to briefly share your story (in 2-3 minutes) with those at your table. Following your story, those at the table will share with you how they heard and witnessed you *living* your gifts as you shared about your experience.

#### **Large Group Sharing**

- What did it feel like to tell your story?
- What did it feel like to hear feedback from others?
- What did it feel like to give someone feedback?

#### Masterful Storytellers!

"The art of storytelling...is considered by the young as more convincing and compelling than the traditional forms of discourse. The language that has the greatest hold on the digital generation is that of the story, rather than that of argumentation."
(Directory for Catechesis, 2020, Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, para. 363)



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### St. Andre Bessette

A PORTER OF THE FAITH AND ROLE MODEL FOR ALL MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

St. Andre Bessette, the saint of Montreal, said, "It is with the smallest brushes that the artist paints the most exquisitely beautiful pictures." This phrase of wisdom speaks well to the importance of the little ways God works in our lives. St. Andre struggled through his life with many challenges. He was orphaned at a young age and suffered from debilitating chronic illness. His attempts to find meaningful work often ended in failure. Despite his shortcomings, Andre, inspired by his mother's faith, nurtured a strong prayer life and devotion to St. Joseph. It was his fidelity to God's call in his life that motivated and encouraged him.

Discerning that call, Andre sought entrance into the Congregation of the Holy Cross in Montreal with a passion and heart to serve in any way he could. When he was admitted, the provincial struggled to find a place for Andre. He was not well-educated and, although he was a strong worker, his health was often a real concern. Finally, the provincial made Andre porter at the Collège Notre-Dame in Côte-des-Neiges. Andre later remarked, "When I entered the order, the provincial showed me the door and I never left."

In the years that followed, Andre humbly greeted those who visited the school and often prayed with them, entrusting them to the intercession of St. Joseph. His reputation as a gentle listener and man of prayer spread and many pilgrims visited the school. When he died, more than a million people attended his funeral. Andre was canonized by the Church in 2010.



"Now the whole offer which Christianity makes is this: that we can, if we let God have His way, come to share in the life of Christ. If we do, we shall then be sharing a life which was begotten, not made, which always existed and always will exist. Christ is the Son of God. If we share in this kind of life we also shall be sons of God. We shall love the Father as He does and the Holy Ghost will arise in us. He came to this world and became a man in order to spread to other men the kind of life He has — by what I call 'good infection.' Every Christian is to become a little Christ. The whole purpose of becoming a Christian is simply nothing else." (C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity)

## St. Andre Bessette

#### A MAN CALLED BY THE SPIRIT

1) What gifts do you recognize in St. Andre and how did he use those gifts to serve others and God?
2) What do you connect with most as you hear the story of St. Andre and why?
3) St. Andre met people at the threshold with great joy and love. What are the thresholds in you life where you bring others to an encounter of Christ by using your gifts?
4) A porter is someone who lovingly and joyfully accompanies a weary sojourner across a threshold. How do you understand the phrase, "Porter of the Faith"? How can you be a "Porter of the Faith" by using your gifts?

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## **Next Steps**

RE-IMAGINING A MISSIONARY CHURCH: USING YOUR GIFTS

After you complete the inventory, you will have some foundational information that can help aid your own prayer, discernment, focus and activity in your parish and the wider community. Understanding that we are all on a journey of faith, this information can be used to determine a fruitful and enriching path forward collaborating with others and encountering Christ. Once you complete the inventory, we encourage you to:

- Continue to pray about your charisms and learn more about how these are lived out.
- Use the Gospel of Mark Reflection Journal to continue to meditate on God's action throughout your life.
- Connect with a small discernment group, prayer mentor, or spiritual director for continued discernment. Learn how others witness you using your gifts and pray on those testimonies to encounter further nudging of the Holy Spirit in your life.
- Work with a pastoral associate or volunteer coordinator to understand the needs in your parish and community to determine how you may use your gifts to respond to or enhance parish activities.

"I dream of a 'missionary option', that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more missionoriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with himself." (Joy of the Gospel, No. 27)





## **Closing Prayer**

PRAYER FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

Heavenly Father, stir in my soul the desire to renew my faith and deepen my relationship with your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, so that I might truly believe in and live the Good News.

Open my heart to hear the Gospel, and grant me the confidence to proclaim the Good News to others.

Pour out your Spirit, so that I might be strengthened to go forth and witness to the Gospel in my everyday life through my words and actions.

In moments of hesitation, remind me: If not me, then who will proclaim the Gospel? If not now, then when will the Gospel be proclaimed?

God our Father, I pray that through the Holy Spirit I might hear the call of the New Evangelization to deepen my faith, grow in confidence to proclaim the Gospel, and boldly witness to the saving grace of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen!

USCCB, 2013, Washington, D.C.

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## **Notes**