



PRAYER INTENTION FOR
EVANGELIZATION

DECEMBER

“Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.”



PRAYER INTENTION COMMENTARY

VIDEO MESSAGE TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON
“THE CATECHIST, WITNESS TO THE MYSTERY”
ORGANIZED BY THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION¹³
Francis
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[...] "Be catechists, don't just work as catechists: this doesn't work! I work as a catechist because I like to teach. But if you are not a catechist, this doesn't work. You will not be fruitful; you will not be fruitful! Being a catechist is a vocation: being a catechist is a vocation, not working as a catechist. Pay attention, I did not say working as a catechist, but to be one, because it involves life. It leads to an encounter with Jesus through words and life, through testimony. [...]"

I often think of the catechist as one who has put himself at the service of God's word, who frequents this word daily to make it his nourishment and to share it with others effectively and credibly. The catechist knows that this word is "alive" (Heb 4:12) because it constitutes the rule of the Church's faith (cf. Conc. Ecum. Vat. II, *Dei Verbum*, 21; *Lumen Gentium*, 15). Consequently, the catechist cannot forget, especially today in a context of religious indifference, that his word is always a first proclamation. Think about it: in this world, in this era of so much indifference, your word will always be a first proclamation, which comes to touch the hearts and minds of many people who are waiting to meet Christ. Even without knowing it, they are waiting for him. And when I say the first announcement I do not mean this only in the temporal sense. Of course, this is important, but it is not always most important. The first announcement means underlining that Jesus Christ, who died and rose through the love of the Father, gives his forgiveness to all without distinction of persons, if only they open their hearts to let themselves be converted! Often we do not perceive the power of grace which, through our words, reaches

¹³ © Translation by Fr. Robert Hurd, SJ



our interlocutors profoundly and moulds them so that they can discover God's love. The catechist is not a teacher or a lecturer who thinks he is giving a lesson. Catechesis is not a lesson; catechesis is the communication of an experience and the witness of a faith that sets hearts on fire, because it introduces the desire to find Christ. This announcement in various ways and with different languages is always the "first" that the catechist is called to give!