

A Convocation Reflection

[On this past November 30th and December 1st almost 800 parishioners from the dioceses of Fargo and Crookston attended a Convocation of Lay Leaders centered on the theme of re-igniting the fires of faith in the lives of our parishes and culture. St. Leo's and St. Thomas parishes had 9 parishioners attend this event. This week Patty Glennon offers this reflection about the Convocation.]

Several months ago, Father Ermer asked me if I would be interested in attending a conference about evangelization. Did I understand what that meant entirely? No. Was I interested to find out? Sure, why not? As I reflect back on the experience, I was very blessed to be asked, and I'm so glad I was able to attend and get an understanding of our mission as Catholic people.

At the convocation, we had a number of keynote speakers provide some insight on evangelization in their lives.

One speaker provided some saddening statistics about the number of Catholics attending mass and the sharp decline in the number of Catholic marriages. It opened my eyes, and my heart, to the real need to share God with others.

There were four basic steps shared by the speakers to start the path of evangelization: Pray about. Pray for. Reach out or Befriend. Accompany.

It all begins with prayer, and I intend to start there. Asking God, "Who do you want me to spread your love to?" When I began thinking about evangelization, I thought it was my responsibility to find the person to evangelize. After the convocation, I now understand that through prayer about it, God will either lead me to the person, or lead the person to me. That takes a lot of pressure off of evangelizing!

I heard a lot of talk about doing regular life activities and inviting others into those activities. There are simple ways to reach out and build relationships with others and bring God into those relationships. Invite someone to supper. Get a group of people over to play cards and enjoy their company. Just maybe a conversation about God might come up.

One of the speakers reflected on a 1993 Letter from Saint Teresa of Calcutta that I wrote down, and I think it is a simple idea to put into action: Live your daily life with a further intention to facilitate the encounter with Jesus for others.

Our purpose and mission is to lead people to Jesus. To help them encounter Christ. From our convocation prayer to provide confidence to proclaim the Good News... If not us, then who will proclaim the Gospel? If not now, then when will the Gospel be proclaimed?

Thank you,
Patty Glennon