

What challenges do we face?

- Relativism –We live in a world that says you can believe whatever you want but don't bother me with your faith.
- People who believe there is no God or that God doesn't care about them because of something bad that happened in their life where they asked for God's help and believe God ignored them.
- People who are looking for God but are angry with the Church because of things like the priest sex abuse scandal. Don't be afraid to admit the Church made a mistake in how they used to handle such things
- People who feel turned away because the church is always asking for money.

How Do We Know When We Are Successful?

Unfortunately we may never know. The best we can do is plant the seed and leave the rest up to God.

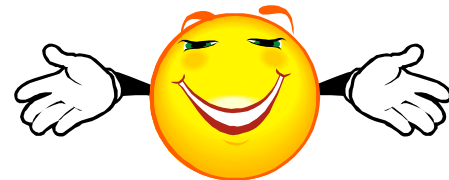
The Importance of Being Welcoming

The most important thing you can do to draw people to church is to live your faith and invite them to come.

So invite someone to come to church with you. Or invite them to our evening gathering for inactive Catholics on Wednesday, September 16, 2009 at 7 p.m. in the rectory.

After that, the most important thing we do as a community is to welcome them.

If a person comes to church and feels like no one cares what reason do they have to come back. Be friendly and introduce yourself but don't come on too strong.



At St. Mary's we are striving to be a welcoming community that understands the needs of its parishioners and the larger community. We welcome all visitors.

Invite your family or friends to join us. If they want to find out more about us they can check us out on the Internet at

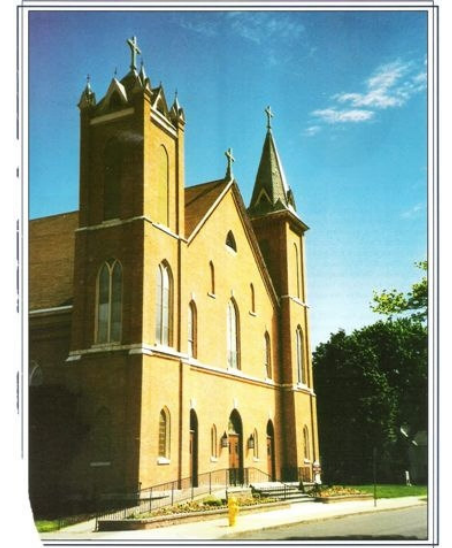
<http://www.stmaryssouthside.org>

For thoughts on what our faith means today check out our blog at

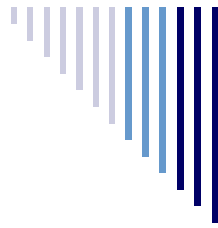
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Come Check Us Out!
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St. Mary's Southside



A Call To Evangelization



The Definition of Evangelization

Pope John Paul II wrote in *Redemptoris Missio*, “the moment has come to commit all of the church’s energy to a new evangelization.”

What is Evangelization?

When we hear of evangelization we might think of images of people preaching on the “street-corner” or people who go from door to door. We might think of “fire and brimstone” preaching. We are not talking about any of that.

To evangelize is to share our faith.

That is all we ask you to do. Mind you, this is not all that easy. People will say that you should keep your faith to yourself. When people do not want to listen, don’t force them.

Sharing Faith

Almost all of us know someone who does not come to church. Some have never been to church. Others received the sacraments but then stopped coming to church.

We need to ask ourselves why these people do not come to church.

For those who have never been to church, they may have not heard God’s Word in a meaningful way them. We are to bring it to them by showing their love and compassion.

For those raised in the church but fallen away, Jesus says, “Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel” We are to reach out to the ones who are “lost.”

Why don’t Catholics share their faith?

- Just never done
- It **SEEMS** foreign to Catholic thinking; that is something Protestants do.
- Nobody showed them how
- Our Culture is influenced by relativism — believe what you want but do not push it on me

What is the message we are to share?

God Loves You And Invites You Home

Jesus himself tells us “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19-20).

Simple Ways to Share Faith

- When faced with a decision between going to church and another event, choose Church. If they ask why you can’t go with them tell them why you are choosing church.
- Live your faith and when others ask why you do as you do—share your faith
- Use Your Gifts to help Others
- Show Compassion and Care
 - Listen
 - Share Your Story
 - Invite

