

# Evangelisation

## The adventure and challenge of Encounter

*Musical Suggestion for Gathering – The Voice, Celtic Woman from 'A New Journey'*

### Prayer

**Be still and Know that I am God**

**Be still and Know that I am God**

**Be still and know that I am**

**Be still and know that**

**Be still and know**

**Be still and**

**Be still**

**Be**



# Introduction

The early Jewish Communities were given the command to stop and listen to the voice of God. Stop and listen. It was from this stopping and listening that they allowed the word of God to seep into their hearts allowing them to go courageously into the world proclaiming the love of God in all they did and to all they met.

The Shema prayer continues to speak to us today. We must allow its powerful message to penetrate our hearts informing us of our mission as Marists. Psalm 46:10 tells us 'Be still and know that I am God'. However if we are truly honest with ourselves, how often do we take time out to be still and listen to that voice of God, a God who

calls us? How often do we stop to listen? How often do we stop to reflect on what it is we are called to do? God has called us each by our very name because of His divine Love for us.



*'I have called you by your name, you are mine. When you pass through raging waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flames shall not consume you.....you are precious in my sight, and honored and I love you....Do not fear for I am with you' Isaiah 43:1-4*

☞ ***How easy is it for you to take time out to listen to God calling you?***

☞ ***What every day busy-ness stops you from listening to Gods voice speaking to you?***

**G**od has a plan for each of us; we have been called by our very name to proclaim the Good News. We have been called to Mission - to go out into the world on God's work of evangelization. We are challenged to go on an adventure encountering others.

St. Teresa tells us we are the hands and feet of Christ on earth. This in itself is scary stuff! Because if we are called to be Christ like, to be the hands and feet of Christ on earth, then we are called to push ourselves out of our comfort zone. We are called to venture to places where we often feel uncomfortable. If we are to walk in Jesus' footsteps, like Him, we must encounter those with whom often we would not choose to spend time....the Leper, the tax collector, the prostitute, the Samaritan!

Today as a Marist Community we stop to listen to the voice of God speaking in our hearts. We stop to discern our individual call to mission and to service, to encounter. We stop to gain strength for our mission and for our encounters. We stop to find strength to reach out to and serve those on the margins of our society. We stop to seek courage to go beyond our comfort zones.



It is from this voice that speaks within each of our hearts that we can learn of God's individual and communal mission for each one of us.

# Scripture

Mark 5:25-34

**A**nd a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him,



immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'" And he looked around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came

in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

The Word of the Lord,  
*Thanks be to God*

*The seraph touched my mouth with it and said. 'Now that this has touched your lips your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.'*

*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying.*

*"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"*

*And I said "Here am I. Send me!"*

*Isaiah 6: 7-8*

# Input

'To love you must encounter'  
Victor Frankl (1905-1997)

In our scripture passage we encounter a woman who has no name and because of her illness, effectively no life.

Being ritually unclean in the Jewish world for twelve years has separated her from people. She is socially dead if not physically dead. To be avoided by everyone is to be rendered utterly isolated. Life can be unbearable in social isolation.

The dead woman's faith restored her to life; she was determined to encounter Jesus. She was willing to take the risk of touching Jesus so that she might be healed and revitalised. Jesus crossed social boundaries within this story by healing the haemorrhaging woman. He showed that the power of touch would not contaminate him but rather bring healing and inclusion. He calls each one of us by name loving us despite our faults and failings.

95. Jesus' message is simple but challenging: Love one another as I have loved you. Jesus not only preaches communion, he lives it. At its heart, Christianity is communion made real in the love of neighbour. In Christ we find that a common mission unites us in community and in turn, community compels us to mission.

**(Water from the Rock)**

96. As we build communities and set up structures that support their vitality, we must share and live a spirituality. Marist spirituality understands community as an excellent place where both self and God are revealed to us through others.

**(Water from the Rock)**

101. In a world thirsty for connection and belonging, home is such a powerful symbol. Families and communities become a crucial place for each one to grow, be sustained, healed and encouraged.

**(Water from the Rock)**

## *On Meeting a Stranger*

*With respect*

*And reverence*

*That the unknown*

*Between us*

*Might flower*

*Into discovery*

*And lead us*

*Beyond*

*The familiar field*

*Blind with the weed*

*Of weariness*

*And old walls*

*Of habit.*

*John O Donoghue, Benedictus*

## Group reflection

- As Marists who do we reach out and touch in our Community? Who do we encounter and welcome?
- How does our community inform our mission? What might this mission be for us personally and communally?
- In what ways do we share our spirituality with our community? Are there new ways to share our spirituality?
- How do we sustain one another in our community?

# Final Prayer and Commitment



**D**ear Lord,  
Allow us to open our hearts to be people of encounter,  
To see beyond our world opening our eyes to the needs of others  
Give us the strength and courage to cross boundaries  
So that people might be given life through our spiritual touch.  
Allow us to open our heart and our home to the stranger accepting what God is offering  
to us through them.  
Still us in our everyday lives to stop and listen to your call to mission  
Invigorate us to be instruments of evangelization in your world  
Accepting our mission with audacity and hope.  
  
*Amen*

# Closing Prayer

*As we go forward from our gathering we allow the words of the Shema to penetrate our hearts and inform our mission:*

**All:**

Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

With all your soul,

And with all your might.

And these words which I command you today shall be upon your heart.

You shall teach them thoroughly to your children,

And you shall speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road,

When you lie down and when you rise.

You shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for a reminder between your eyes.

And you shall write them upon the doorposts of your house and upon your gates.

*Amen*

St Marcellin Champagnat

*Pray for us,*

Mary our Good Mother

*Pray for us,*

And let us always remember

*To pray for one another.*

# Notes