

Pathways of Diocesan Renewal

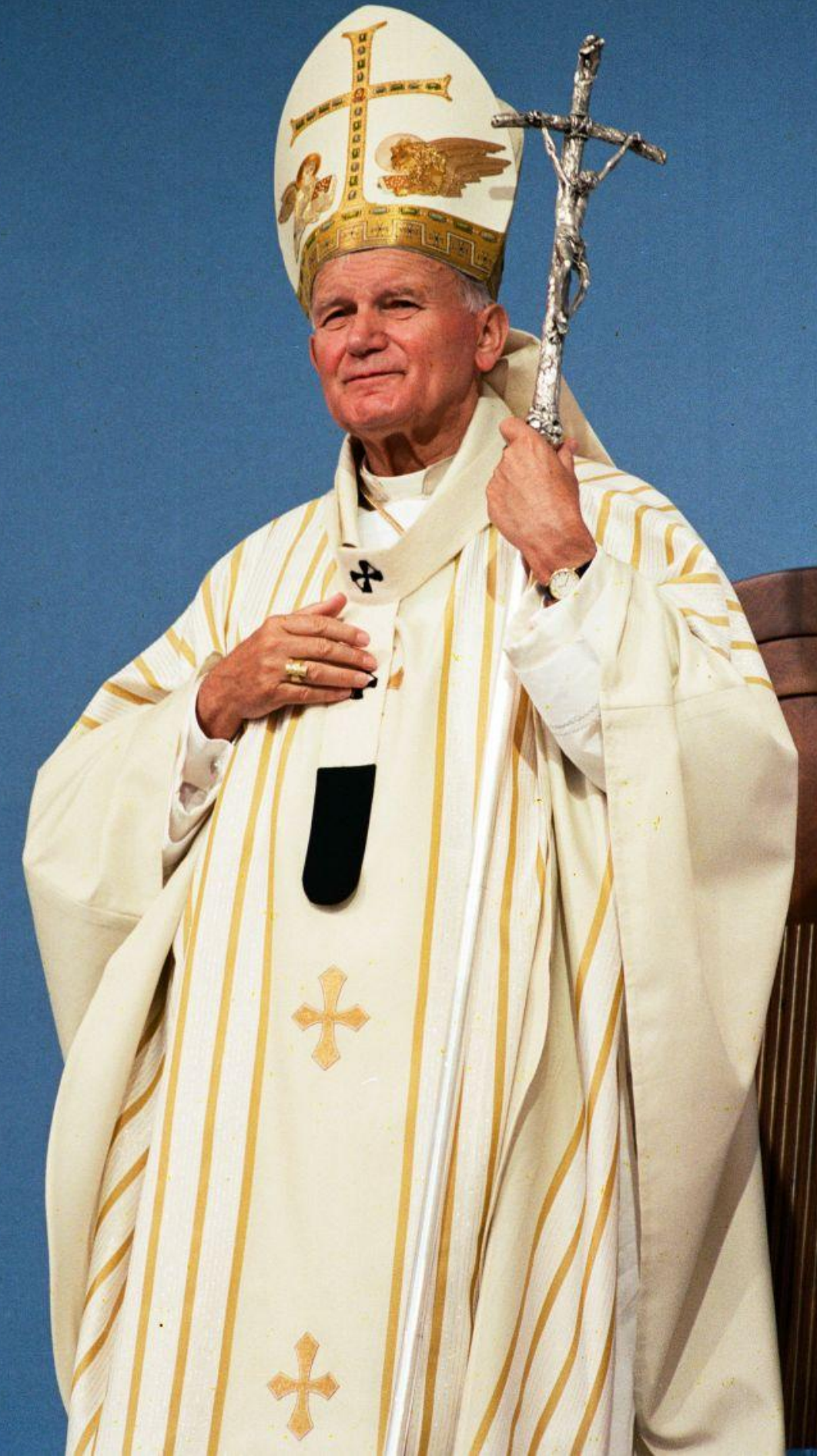
Implementation Phase of the Synod



Diocese of Colorado Springs

Synodality: Communion at the Service of Mission

Precisely because it signifies life, communion in the Church must constantly increase. Therefore, the Bishops, remembering that “each of them is the visible principle and foundation of the unity of his particular Church”, cannot but feel duty-bound to promote communion in their dioceses, so that the drive for a new evangelization in America may be more effective...“It is up to the Bishop, with the help of the priests, deacons, religious and lay people to implement a coordinated pastoral plan, which is systematic and participatory, involving all the members of the Church and awakening in them a missionary consciousness”. (St. John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America*, 36)



A New Cultural Reality



The “new” secular and now post-Christian culture demands a new way of teaching, witnessing, and living the Gospel of Jesus Christ—one that is new in its ardor, methods, and expressions.



The Fields Are Ripe for the Harvest

Human longing and the need for religion, however, are not able to be totally extinguished. When persons in conscience have the courage to face the more serious questions of human existence-particularly questions related to the purpose of life, to suffering and to dying-they are unable to avoid making their own the words of truth uttered by Saint Augustine: "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you". In the same manner the present-day world bears witness to this as well, in ever-increasing and impressive ways, through an openness to a spiritual and transcendent outlook towards life... and the return to a sense of the sacred and to prayer.
(St. John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, 4)





A New Ecclesial Reality

In our times, the Church after Vatican II in a renewed outpouring of the Spirit of Pentecost has come to a more lively awareness of her missionary nature and has listened again to the voice of her Lord who sends her forth into the world as “the universal sacrament of salvation”.

You go too. The call is a concern not only of Pastors, clergy, and men and women religious. The call is addressed to everyone: lay people as well are personally called by the Lord, from whom they receive a mission on behalf of the Church and the world. (St. John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, 2)





A Rediscovery of Vatican II

Although the time that separates us from this event is not so long, it is equally true that the generation of bishops, theologians and believers of Vatican II is no longer with us. **Therefore, while we hear the call not to let its prophecy fade, and to continue to seek ways and means to implement its insights, it will be important to get to know it again closely, and to do so not through “hearsay” or interpretations that have been given, but by rereading its documents and reflecting on their content...**As Benedict XVI taught, “as the years have passed, the Conciliar Documents have lost none of their timeliness; indeed, their teachings are proving particularly relevant to the new situation of the Church and the current globalized society.” (Pope Leo XIV, General Audience, Wednesday, 7 January 2026)



Key Themes from the Final Document of the Synod

- Centered around a deeper reception and understanding of Vatican II
- Ordered towards a deeper encounter with Christ and the universal call to holiness
- Oriented towards the faithful's baptismal and sacramental identity in Christ: identity leads to mission
- Focused on an “ecclesial conversion” that fosters a spirituality of communion that leads to mission
- This ecclesial conversion is at the service of the formation of missionary discipleship and active and ongoing participation in the life of the Church of all the baptized.



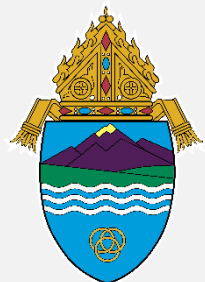
Implementation Phase Mission Statement

Centered on the missionary renewal of the Second Vatican Council and “reinvigorating its prophetic force for today’s world”¹ the implementation phase will seek to increase the baptismal identity of all the faithful to become missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. This phase will focus on three pathways of renewal: By growing in **humility** through a personal encounter with Christ and strengthening the **unity** of the Body of Christ the Church, we are sent by Christ in **charity** to proclaim and witness the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world.

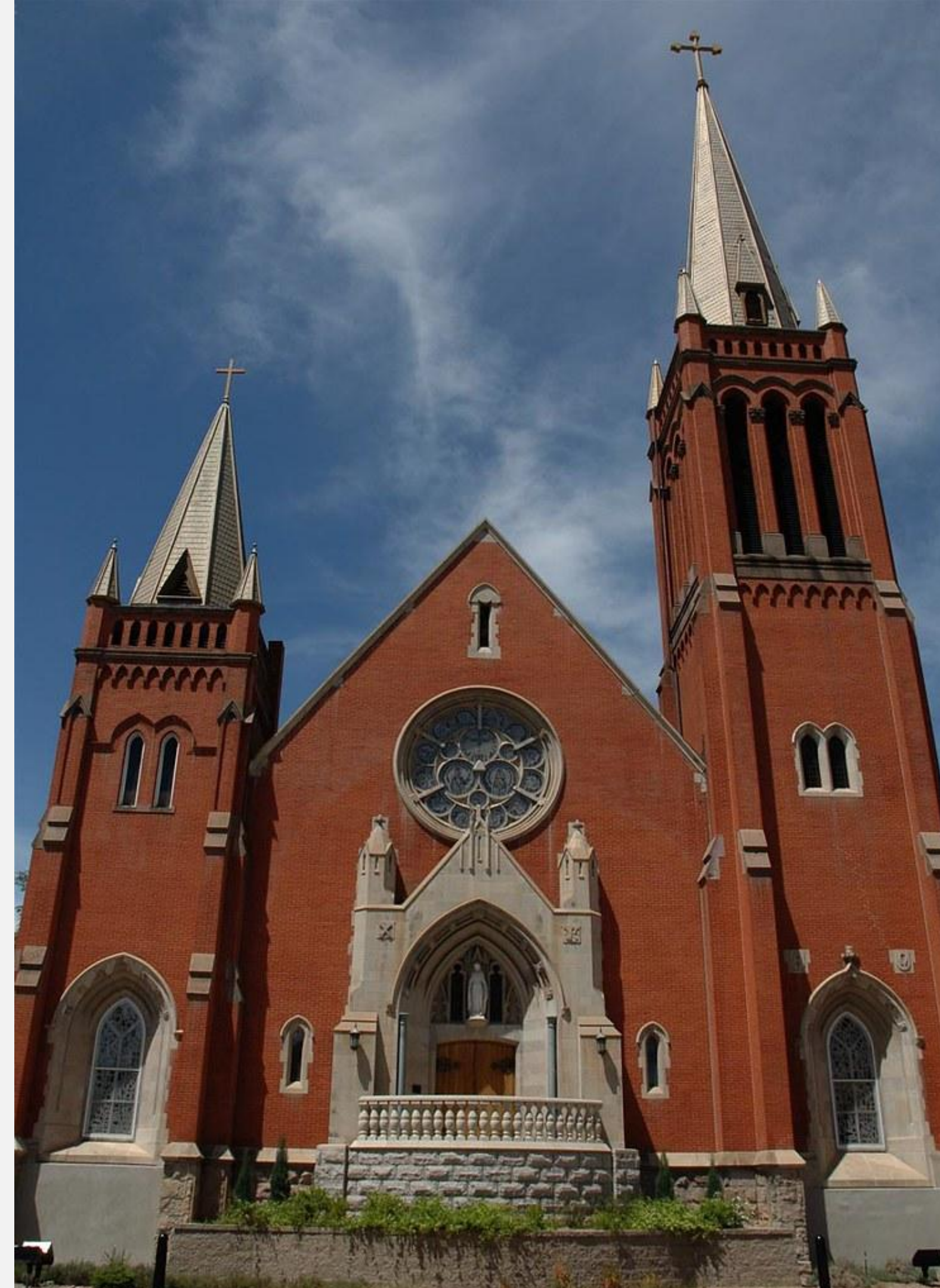
2027: Humility: Encountering Christ

2028: Unity: United in Christ

2029: Charity: Sent by Christ



¹Synod Final Document, 1



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Humility: Encountering Christ

“It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20)



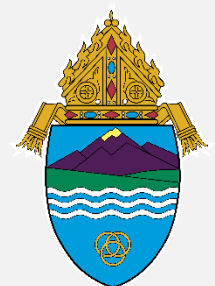
Humility: Encountering Christ

- Humility is “the virtue by which a Christian acknowledges that God is the author of all good. Humility avoids inordinate ambition or pride, and provides the foundation for turning to God in prayer. Voluntary humility can be described as ‘poverty of spirit.’” (CCC, Glossary)
- This “poverty of spirit” disposes us to encounter Christ and allow his Spirit and his grace transform us to become like him as to use us as his instruments of mercy and salvation: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20)



Our Gaze Fixed on the Lord: Encountering Christ in Prayer

Prayer can truly change your life. For it turns your attention away from yourself and directs your mind and your heart toward the Lord. If we only look at ourselves, with our limitations and sins, we quickly give way to sadness and discouragement. But if we keep our eyes fixed on the Lord, then our hearts are filled with hope, our minds are washed with the light of truth, and we come to know the fullness of the Gospel with all its promise and life. (St. John Paul II, *Meeting with Youth, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1987*)





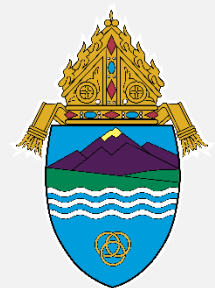
Self Emptying for Gift: Encountering Christ in the Liturgy

A place of encounter with Jesus is the sacred Liturgy. Thanks to the Second Vatican Council, we have a very rich account of the manifold presence of Christ in the Liturgy...Christ is present in the celebrant who renews at the altar the one and only Sacrifice of the Cross; he is present in the Sacraments through which he exercises his efficacious power. When his word is proclaimed, it is he himself who speaks to us. He is also present in the community, by virtue of his promise that “where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20). He is present “especially under the Eucharistic species”. (St. John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America*, 12)



Eucharistic Adoration: Sitting at the Feet of the Master

“The time you spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the best time you will spend on earth. Each moment that you spend with Jesus will deepen your union with Him and make your soul everlastingly more glorious and beautiful in Heaven, and will help bring about everlasting peace on earth.” (St. Teresa of Calcutta)





Renewal of the Mind: Encountering Christ in Catechesis

Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.
(Romans 12:2)

Accordingly, the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity. (St. John Paul II, *Catechesi tradendae*, 20)



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Unity: United in Christ

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all reach the unity of faith and mature manhood.” (Ephesians 4:11-13)



The Great Challenge of Unity

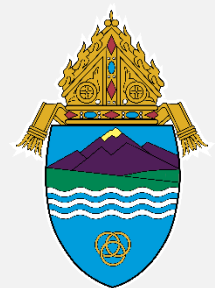
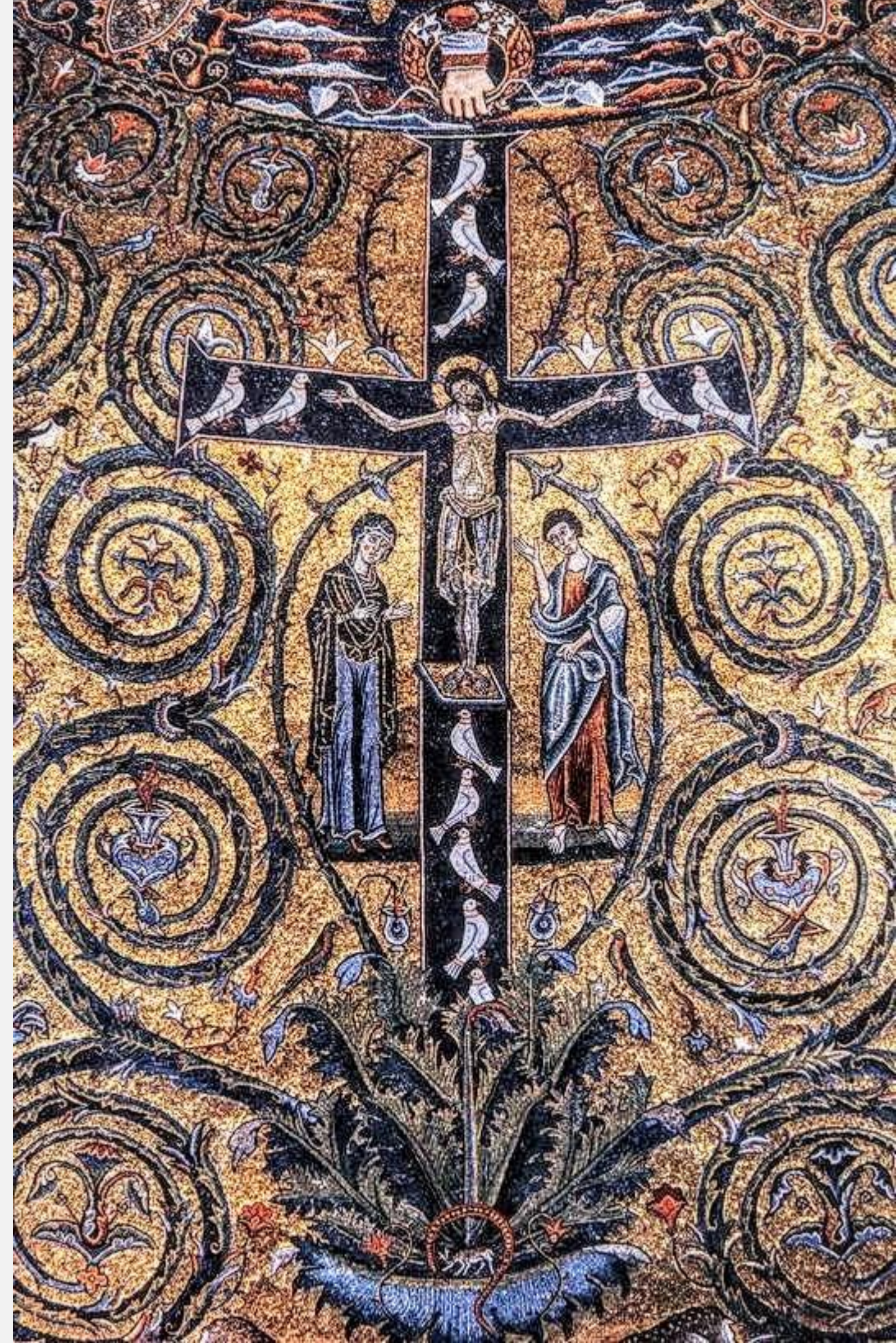
To make the Church the home and the school of communion: that is the great challenge facing us in the millennium which is now beginning, if we wish to be faithful to God's plan and respond to the world's deepest yearnings.
(St. John Paul II, *Novo millennio ineunte*, 43)



Communion Leads to Mission

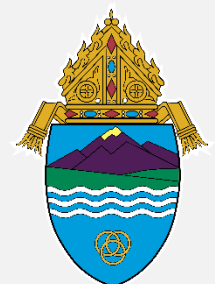
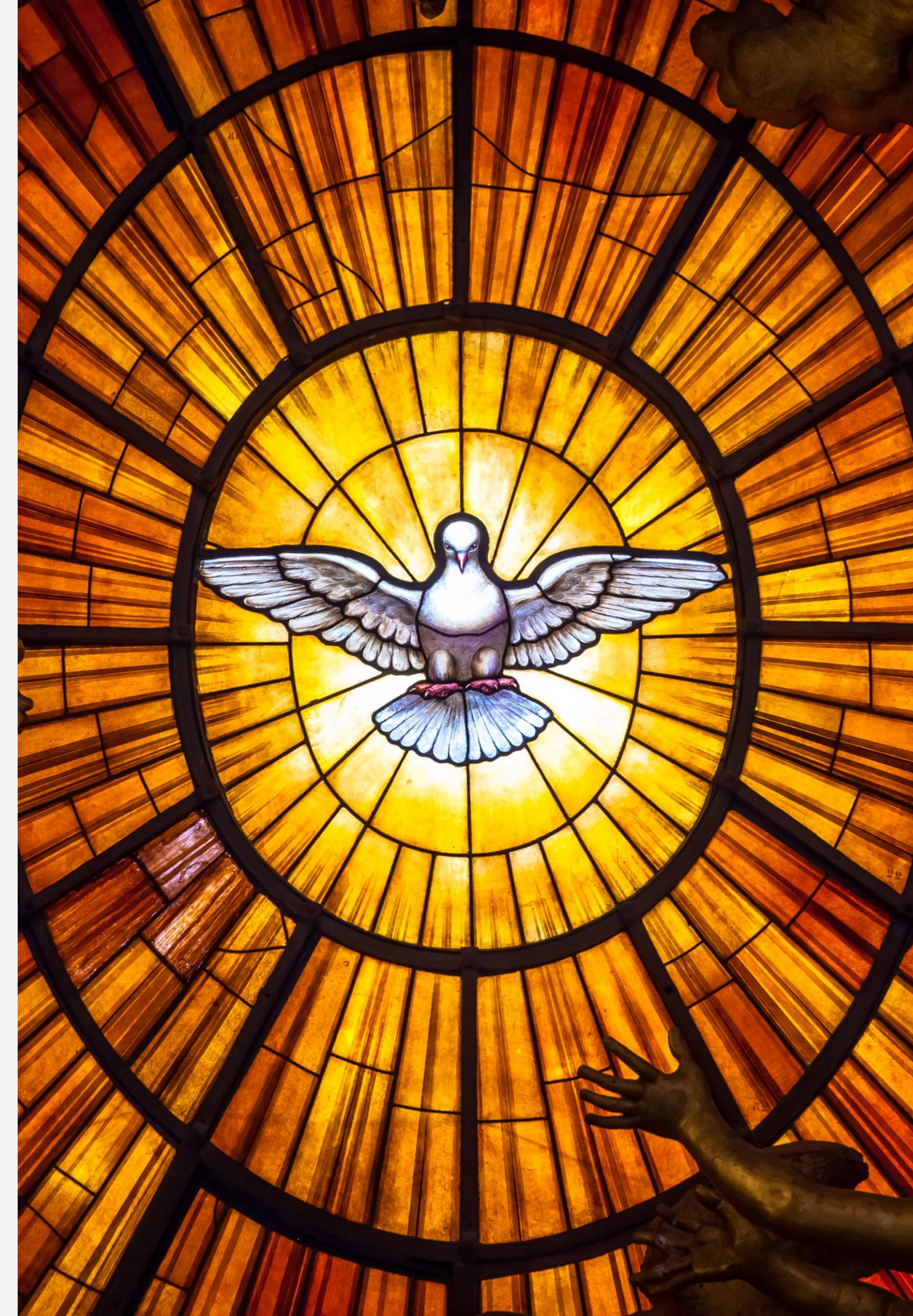
Communion with Jesus, which gives rise to the communion of Christians among themselves, is an indispensable condition for bearing fruit: "Apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5).

Communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other, they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other, to the point that communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission: **communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion.** It is always the one and the same Spirit who calls together and unifies the Church and sends her to preach the Gospel "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). (St. John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, 32)



Charisms at the Service of Unity and Mission

In the Christian community, all the Baptized are enriched with gifts to share, each according to his or her vocation and way or condition of life...The variety of charisms, which originates in the freedom of the Holy Spirit, aims and unifying the ecclesial body of Christ and promoting mission in different places and cultures. These gifts are not the exclusive property of those who receive and use them, nor are they intended solely for their personal benefit or for that of a group...they are intended for the flourishing of the life of the Christian community and the development of society as a whole. (*Final Document of the Synod, 57*)



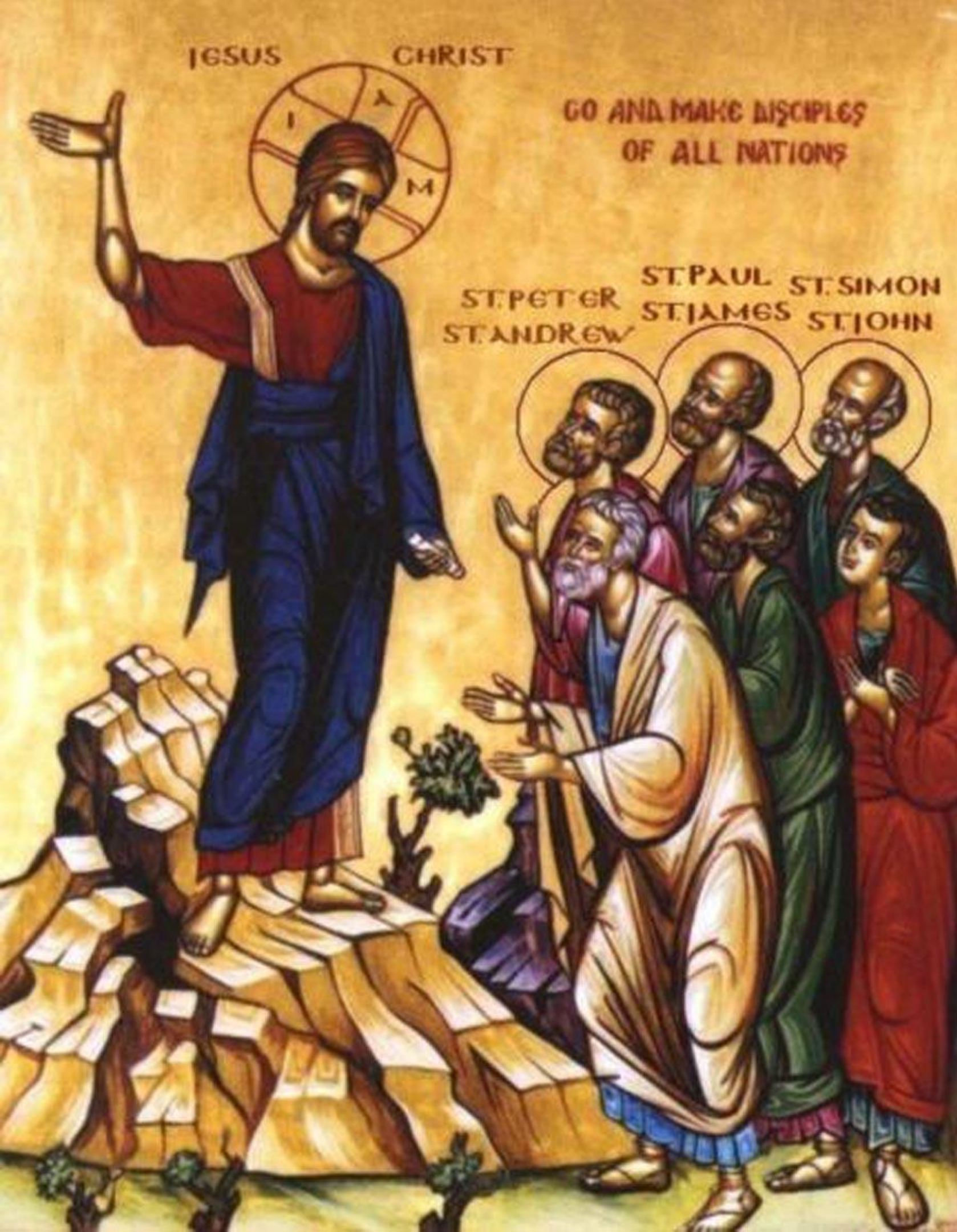
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Charity: Sent by Christ

“You are witnesses of these things.”

(Luke 24:48)



Sent by Christ in Charity

By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35). The Lord's words on this point are too precise for us to diminish their import. **Many things are necessary for the Church's journey through history, not least in this new century; but without charity (agape), all will be in vain.** It is again the Apostle Paul who in the hymn to love reminds us: even if we speak the tongues of men and of angels, and if we have faith "to move mountains", but are without love, all will come to "nothing" (cf. 1 Cor 13:2). **Love is truly the "heart" of the Church.** (St. John Paul II, *Novo millennio ineunte*, 42)





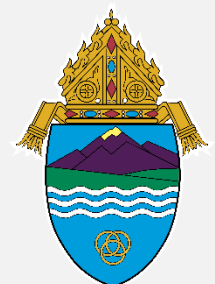
The Sacrament of Charity

The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God's love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him. The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission: "an authentically eucharistic Church is a missionary Church." (Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 84)



The Call to Missionary Discipleship

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; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. **Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always "missionary disciples".** (Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 120)





Missionary Disciples: Sharers in Christ's Mission

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, at the beginning of my pastoral ministry, **my aim was to emphasize forcefully the priestly, prophetic and kingly dignity of the entire People of God** in the following words: “He who was born of the Virgin Mary, the carpenter's Son -as he was thought to be-Son of the living God (confessed by Peter), has come to make us 'a kingdom of priests.' **The Second Vatican Council has reminded us of the mystery of this power and of the fact that the mission of Christ -Priest, Prophet-Teacher, King-continues in the Church. Everyone, the whole People of God, shares in this threefold mission**”. (St. John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, 14)

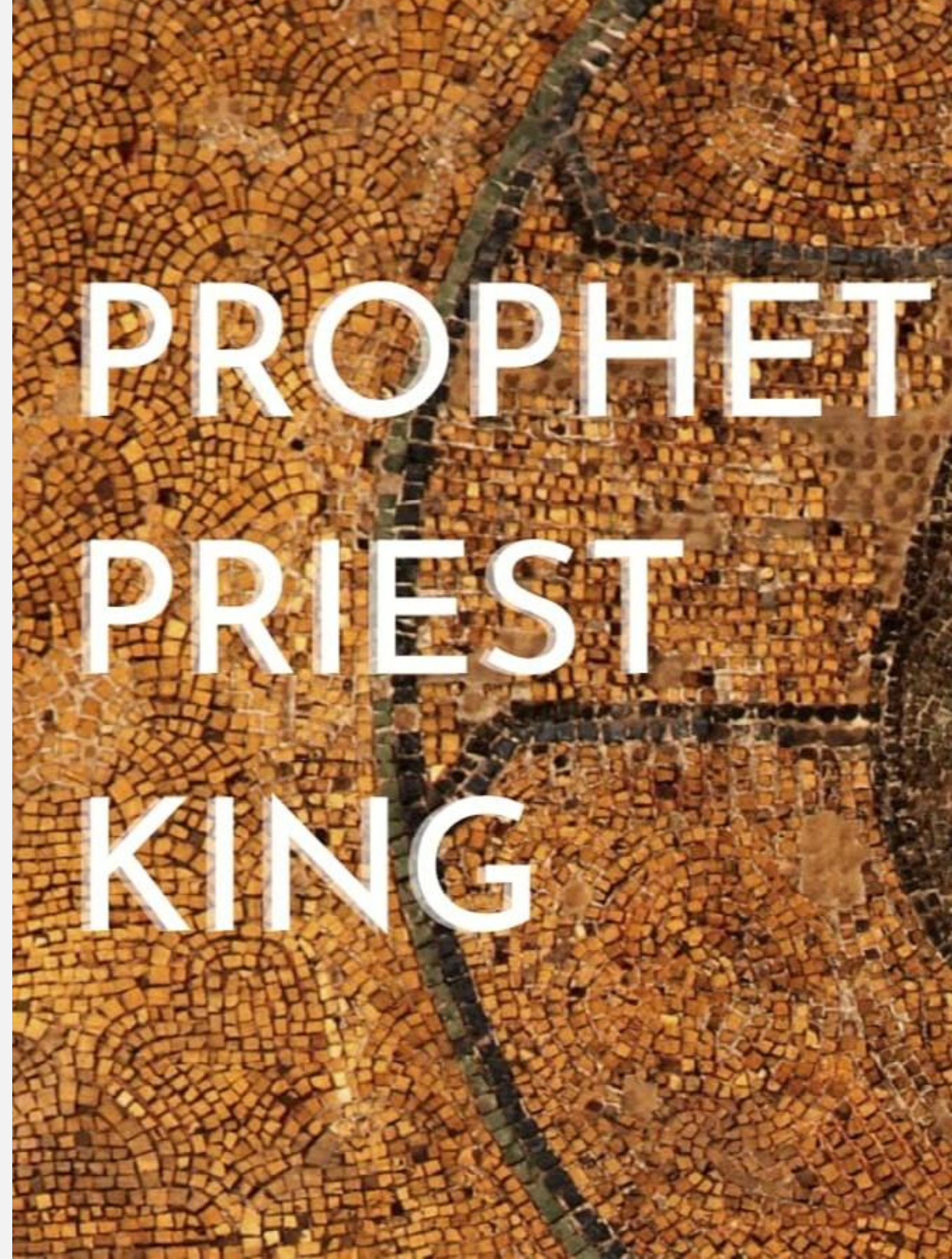


The Three Pillars of Missionary Discipleship

Prayer and Worship (Priest): Offering ourselves as a spiritual sacrifice, especially in the liturgy, to be transformed by grace to sanctify and consecrate the world to God.

Evangelization and Witness (Prophet): Accepting the Gospel in faith and then spreading it through evangelization, teaching, and witness by “always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.” (1 Peter 3:15)

Holiness and Service (King): Reigning with Christ and spreading the Kingdom of God through conversion, spiritual battle and holiness and offering a gift of ourselves through Christian service and works of mercy.



Much is at Stake! Called to Be Convincing Witnesses

The world which, paradoxically, despite innumerable signs of the denial of God, is nevertheless searching for Him in unexpected ways and painfully experiencing the need of Him- the world is calling for evangelizers to speak to it of a God whom the evangelists themselves should know and be familiar with as if they could see the invisible. The world calls for and expects from us simplicity of life, the spirit of prayer, charity towards all, especially towards the lowly and the poor, obedience and humility, detachment and self-sacrifice. Without this mark of holiness, our word will have difficulty in touching the heart of modern man. It risks being vain and sterile.. (St. Paul VI, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 76)

