

DICASTERY FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH · 22 OCTOBER 2026

Venite ad Me

Considerations on the Transmission of the Faith in an Epochal Change

“Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28)

WHY THIS DOCUMENT

A return to the foundation

“In a time of great fragmentation, it is necessary to return to the foundation of our faith, to the kerygma.”

Pope Leo XIV to the Italian bishops, June 2025, the invitation the document takes up for the whole Church

Considerations, not a Doctrinal Note

Discursive by design, to stir reflection rather than settle questions

Built from the bishops' reports

Conferences on every continent sent reports and personal testimonies

Focused on the experience of faith

The act of believing (*fides qua*), not catechesis or the full content of doctrine

HOW IT IS BUILT

Eight chapters, one heart

I

The Proclamation of the
Father's Love

II

The Light of Faith

III

The Epochal Change

IV

The Centrality of the
Kerygma

V

The Transmission of the
Faith in Communities

VI

Faith and Culture

VII

Some Specific Areas of
Attention

VIII

Personal Testimonies

What is handed on is a Person

“God is love for everyone; God is mercy for everyone.”

Jesus speaks the language of daily life

Trades, food, weather, children's games: his word is never abstract

The last become the first

He rekindles “the hope of being able to hope again”

The cross becomes a throne

Death cannot extinguish the true light: Christ is alive

Faith begins as an encounter

*“Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, with a person who gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.” **Benedict XVI***

A form of life, not information

Faith is passed on “as a form of ecclesial life into which the believer is gradually introduced”

By attraction, not proselytism

“It is not the Church that attracts, but Christ” (Pope Leo XIV)

Faith is first handed on “in dialect”

“My father’s hands and my mother’s lips — these are the things that taught me more about the good Lord than the catechism did.”

Fr. Aimé Duval, S.J., remembering evening prayer at home

The family: the first “tabernacle”

Faith passed on in the language of love at home, now interrupted in many parts of the world

The community: a second stage

Where a person learns to see everything “through the eyes of Jesus”

So: evangelise adults

Move beyond a ministry focused only on children

CHAPTER III · THE EPOCHAL CHANGE

“What we are experiencing is not simply an epoch of changes, but an epochal change.”

Pope Francis, 2019. Aparecida had already said its deepest level is cultural: the whole vision of the human person “is vanishing.”

What the bishops reported

Region	What the bishops see
Europe, North America, Oceania	Advanced secularisation: ever fewer parents pass on the faith
Eastern Europe	Communism skipped the parents: grandmothers taught the grandchildren
Latin America and the Caribbean	Family and society no longer continuous; the Antilles note it too
Asia	Minority Churches; career pressure leaves catechesis to grandparents
Africa	Western lifestyles, shallow inculturation, prosperity gospels

Everywhere, “a sort of ‘automatic’ transmission of the faith has ceased to exist.”

Two forces reshaping how faith travels



The “sovereignty of the self”

- Individualism cuts the person off from a “we”
- Faith becomes a private matter
- Catholics “tend to be more absorbed in culture than in faith” (U.S. bishops)



Digital culture and AI

- Space, time and authority are reshaped
- A “do-it-yourself” faith, shaped by taste
- No longer clear who speaks with authority

Signs of hope, and a warning

+28%

adult baptisms in France in 2026, now more than three times the 2016 figure. About half are aged 18 to 25.

But will they stay?

Many new Christians “often, shortly after receiving baptism, return to a state of practical indifference.”

The answer: rediscover the community that welcomes and accompanies.

CHAPTER IV · THE CENTRALITY OF THE KERYGMA

“Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.”

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 164: the first proclamation, “first in a qualitative sense,” to be heard “again and again” at every stage

Baptism: What the Font Gave You

The whole mystery — given from the first moment. You already carry this.

You are in Christ

Not beside Him. Within Him. You share His life.

You died and rose with Him

His Paschal passage is yours — sacramentally real.

The Holy Spirit lives in you

The same Spirit who raised Christ dwells within you.

Faith, Hope, and Charity

All three — infused at the font, waiting to unfold.

Your sin is forgiven

The wound of the first fall is healed. You begin again.

You belong to the Body

Saved in community. You are never alone on this road.

You share Christ's mission

Priestly. Prophetic. Royal. Every baptised person.

You are sealed — forever

An indelible mark. Nothing can undo what God has done.

What Is the Kerygma?

Not first a philosophy. Not first a moral programme. The joyful proclamation of Jesus Christ.

1

Christ has died
for our sins

For us. In our place. Out of love.
The cross is the form of God's love takes in a wounded world.
(1 Cor 15:3; Acts 2:23)

2

Christ is risen

God raised Jesus from the dead.
The tomb is empty.
Death has been conquered.
(1 Cor 15:4; Acts 2:24)

3

Christ lives now

Not merely a figure of history, but the living Lord who calls, saves and sends today.
(Acts 2:33; Rev 1:18)

4

Christ will come again

The risen Lord will come again in glory to bring all things to fulfilment. History has a destination because Christ has a destination for history.
(Acts 1:11; 1 Thess 4:16–17)

The proclamation invites response.



Hear



Believe



Repent



Be Baptised



Receive the Holy Spirit



Live as a disciple

Past • Present • Future — the heart of salvation history in four movements that call us to faith and discipleship.

The Full Kerygma: The Apostolic Proclamation

Not first a philosophy. Not first a moral programme. The joyful proclamation of Jesus Christ.

1

**Promised
beforehand**



God promised through the Scriptures that He would save His people and bless all nations.

(Acts 3:18; Isa 53:5; Ps 22:16–18)

2

**Fulfilled
in Jesus**



The promises of God were fulfilled in Jesus Christ — truly God and truly man.

(Gal 4:4–5; Jn 1:14; Luke 2:11)

3

Crucified



He was handed over, suffered and died on the cross for our sins.

(1 Cor 15:3; Rom 5:8; Isa 53:5)

4

Risen



God raised Jesus from the dead. The tomb is empty. Death has been conquered.

(1 Cor 15:4; Acts 2:24; Matt 28:6)

5

Exalted



God exalted Him to His right hand. Jesus is Lord of all.

(Acts 2:33–36; Phil 2:9–11)

6

Spirit given



The Holy Spirit has been poured out so we can know, follow and witness to Jesus.

(Acts 2:38; Acts 1:8; Gal 4:6)

7

Coming again



The risen Lord will come again in glory to bring all things to fulfilment.

(Acts 1:11; 1 Thess 4:16–17; Rev 21:5)

The proclamation invites response.



Hear



Believe



Repent



Be Baptised



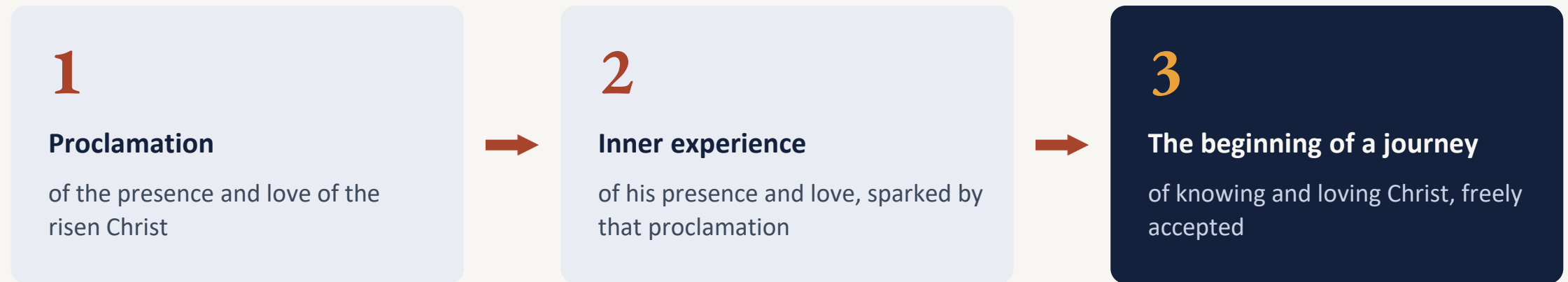
*Receive the
Holy Spirit*



*Live as a
disciple*

From promise to fulfilment — the whole story of God's saving love in seven movements that call us to faith and discipleship.

A threefold process



Not a mere transmission of content, but a “performative” proclamation that touches the heart.

A word that sets hearts on fire

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”

Luke 24:32, the model the document proposes

Not a cold exposition

Not “scholastic,” “dogmatic” or “moralistic,” but an appeal from the heart

The language of closeness

Born of listening; narrative, like the parables

Language that becomes testimony

“Not carrying a torch in hand ... but being that light” (St Alberto Hurtado)

Formation goes deeper, never past

“Nothing is more solid, profound, secure, meaningful, and wisdom-filled than that initial proclamation. All Christian formation consists of entering more deeply into the kerygma.”

Evangelii Gaudium 165

The hierarchy of truths

With new generations, adult catechumens and returnees, do not get lost in the many areas of doctrine and lose sight of the centre:

the love of God, “like a flame capable of restoring life, joy, hope, and trust.”

Where faith is handed on today

Community

“one heart and one soul,”
hospitable and joyful

The Word

groups that pray with Scripture,
lectio divina

Friendship

“a privileged space” for sharing
the faith

Liturgy

faith transmitted “in a
performative way”

Holiness

nothing makes the Church
more credible

Closeness

tenderness to all, and the poor
first

Beauty

art, literature and above all
music

Stages of life

baptisms, weddings, funerals;
adults

CHAPTER VI · FAITH AND CULTURE

“A faith that does not become culture is a faith that has not been fully embraced, not fully thought through, and not faithfully lived.”

St John Paul II. Inculturation is not optional: “where the faith touches the cultural roots and expressions of a people, its transmission truly becomes easier and more fruitful.”

Eight areas to watch

Area	What the document asks
Popular piety	Renew it; pilgrimages and confraternities draw the young
The homily	Narrative preaching, as Jesus the storyteller did
Volunteers	Welcome the “Good Samaritans” of our time toward Christ
Women	Wider access to forums where decisions are made
Large events	Gather people around the great themes, such as peace
History	Learn from past crises: Irish monks, mendicants, reform
Schools	Often the only point of contact with the Church
Ecumenism	Not an alternative to proclamation, but a form of it

The kerygma in ordinary lives

“My faith ceased to be an afterthought in my life; it became the sole meaning of my existence.”

A laywoman in Poland, after a renewal seminar

“The focus of my prayers is no longer on what God can give me. Instead, I ask what I can give to God.”

A catechist from a small town in Jamaica

Thirteen testimonies: Colombia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Slovakia, the United States, Japan, Angola, Poland, France, Jamaica, Switzerland and Vietnam.

CONCLUSION

One candle lit from another

“Faith is passed on, we might say, by contact, from one person to another, just as one candle is lit from another.”

At the Easter Vigil the light passes from the paschal candle until the whole church is lit. Mary, “our teacher of the transmission of the faith,” carries that light to every people.

How does the beginning become a life?

The document leaves it open

Step 3 is only “the beginning of a journey,” and the question “remains open to further study and new developments.”

“The kerygma, proclaimed and lived in its simplicity, clarity, and power, forms disciples who build healthy relationships and transform Antillean societies.”

Descent

“Not in word alone, but also in power and in the holy Spirit” (1 Thes 1:5)

Assimilation

“Do your utmost” (2 Pt 1:5): the kerygma made one’s own

CONVERSATION IN THE SPIRIT

“The kerygma, proclaimed and lived in its simplicity, clarity, and power, forms disciples who build healthy relationships and transform Antillean societies.”

CONVERSATION IN THE SPIRIT

The document calls the third step only a “beginning” and says its subject “remains open to further study” (nos. 76, 139). How does the beginning become a life? The bishops of the Antilles named the whole movement:

- **Descent:** the Word arrives “not in word alone, but also in power and in the holy Spirit and with much conviction” (1 Thessalonians 1:5).
- **Assimilation:** everything is already given (2 Peter 1:3); “do your utmost” (1:5) until what was proclaimed becomes who we are, and ends in love (1:7).

CONVERSATION IN THE SPIRIT

THE OPEN QUESTION

The document calls the third step only a “beginning” and says its subject “remains open to further study” (nos. 76, 139). How does the beginning become a life? The bishops of the Antilles named the whole movement:

CONVERSATION IN THE SPIRIT

Pray first with Luke 24:13–35 (Emmaus) and the words of Evangelii Gaudium 164 above.

When has the Good News of Jesus come to you not in word alone, but in power, so that your heart burned within you? In the light of that experience, what is the Holy Spirit asking of our community, so that those we serve receive the faith as a living encounter, and not only as words?

- **Round 1:** share what came to you in prayer. Others listen in silence.
- **Round 2:** what touched me in what I heard? Where did I sense the Spirit?
- **Round 3:** what is the Spirit saying to us? What one step are we called to take?

FOR DISCUSSION

Four questions for our community

1 Who handed the faith to you, and in what “dialect”?

2 Where is the kerygma heard “again and again” among us, and where has it become background?

3 What happens to people in the months after they are baptised or received?

4 Does our language set hearts on fire, or is it “scholastic,” “dogmatic” or “moralistic”?