



B: SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

B/6C

BE CONVERTED TO GOD'S WAYS!

GOSPEL SHARING & EVANGELIZATION
EUCHARIST AND EVANGELIZATION

TOPICS OF AsIPA TEXTS:

A : GOSPEL SHARING

B : SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

C : A PARTICIPATORY CHURCH

D : TRAINING FOR PARISH TEAMS

B/6C

BE CONVERTED TO GOD'S WAYS! GOSPEL SHARING & EVANGELIZATION EUCHARIST AND EVANGELIZATION

INTRODUCTION

In the first session on evangelization we tried to understand what it means. In the second session we looked at ways of sharing our hope in Jesus Christ. In this session we will see how Gospel sharing and Eucharist are important ways of evangelizing.

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A. WE NEED TO BE EVANGELIZED

- *Small groups of 3/4*
- *Read the following story and answer the questions that follow:*

Yvonne's baby had just been baptized and all the family and friends were gathered for a celebration meal. The only problem was that Yvonne's mother and her sisters and brothers were not on talking terms. They came for the meal, they greeted the child and Yvonne but they avoided Yvonne's mother. The other guests did not notice this but it made Yvonne rather sad. She felt that it was strange to celebrate this beautiful sacrament of Baptism that makes us a part of the body of Christ and yet behave as though we are strangers.

Questions for reflection

- 1. What is happening in this story?*
- 2. Who needs to change and why?*
- 3. Is something similar happening with us in our families, communities, and parishes?*
- 4. In what other areas of our lives do we need to be converted to Christ?*

Supplement

- Working for unity rather than fighting among ourselves.
- Cooperating instead of competing.
- Building people up rather than gossiping.
- Reaching out more to help others.
- Praying, not only in our times of difficulty.
- Being reconciled among ourselves.

B. ALLOW GOD TO LOVE US

We need to allow God to love us. God freely offered his love to Zaccheus and invited him to respond in a radical way to that love.

- *Read Luke 19: 1-10 in pairs.*

- *Discuss how the love of God changed Zaccheus.*

- *Report to the whole group after 6 or 7 minutes.*

Supplement

- Knowing he was loved gave Zaccheus courage to leave his old ways behind.
- Realizing that he was being invited to a new life, Zaccheus wanted to make amends for his past failures.
- When Jesus invited himself to the home of Zaccheus, he knew that he was totally accepted and wanted his friends to have the same experience.
- Genuine love will make us give our life freely for others.
- The Word is a light for our lives freeing us from the darkness of our past deeds.
- The Word of God purifies us and prepares us for the work of God.

C. GOSPEL SHARING AND EVANGELIZATION

Gospel sharing is the way we allow God to love us and evangelize others and ourselves.

Read the following true story and discuss the question in the whole group.

The 14 families in a SCC in Kanirapally faced a unique problem. Seven of their families were in two groups and were divided over a property dispute for many years. There was a great deal of bitterness and hatred against one another. The efforts of many including the parish priest failed to reconcile them. Eventually SCCs were formed in that parish. The members gathered and did Gospel Sharing. Gradually, the Holy Spirit put into the hearts of the seven family leaders not involved in the fight to take the initiative to call the others for a friendly dialogue. The two opposing groups were brought together and they reached an amicable settlement. The whole SCC celebrated their re-union as brothers and sisters in the faith.

Questions for discussion

- 1. How did Gospel Sharing help the SCC of Kanirapally to become an instrument of evangelization?*
- 2. In what ways can Gospel Sharing help us become instruments of Evangelization?*

D. EUCHARIST AND EVANGELIZATION

- *Work in pairs for 10 minutes.*
- *Read the following text and discuss the questions.*
- *Report to the whole group*

"What the faithful have received by faith and Sacrament in the celebration of the Eucharist should have its effect on their way of life. Everyone will seek to fill the world with the spirit of Christ and "in all things, in the very midst of human affairs" to become a witness of Christ. For no Christian community can be built up unless it has as its basis and pivot the celebration of the holy Eucharist. It is from this therefore any attempt to form a community must begin." (*No. I of Eucharisticum Mysterium, the Instruction on the worship of the Eucharistic Mystery, Vatican II.*)

Questions for discussion

1. *What does the following text, from the teaching of Vatican II, say about the Holy Eucharist?*
2. *How does our Eucharistic celebration evangelize us?*

Supplement

Read silently the points below and discuss any that have not been mentioned before or that strikes you.

- Christ himself is present in the community, in the priest, in the Word and in the bread and wine. He transforms the community into his agents on mission.
- The Scripture texts proclaimed and explained inspire us to act with prophetic zeal in our own circumstances.

- The Eucharist unites us into one; helps us to accept and forgive one another and all our brothers and sisters.
- The Eucharistic food strengthens and motivates the believers to live as a sacrifice for the Kingdom of God.
- The self-sacrificing love of the Eucharist becomes our way of loving others.
- The Holy Spirit, who unites us, transforms the bread and wine and fills us, gives us the courage to be Christ for others in our daily lives.

CONCLUSION

Para liturgy

Take a few moments of silence to reflect on one insight from this session.

Silence (3-5 minutes)

Pray: That we allow the Spirit of Jesus to use us as his instruments to bring the good news of love, forgiveness, compassion and care to one another; that we may stand for justice and collaborate with one another to nourish this earth according to God's loving plan for all humanity.

Invite all who wish to pray spontaneously

Concluding prayer

For Christian communities everywhere at all times, you O Risen Lord are the source of liberation and fullness of joy. That is your promise. You have told that: you have come 'to set the captives free...' (Lk.4: 18), ... 'that your joy may be complete' (Jn.15: 11). This is our great hope, which we experience in our lives. Help us to share it with others so that they too will experience the same. Amen.

METHOD OF ASIPA TEXTS

ASIPA TEXTS are compiled for Christian men and women at grass root level of the parish. They can be conducted most fruitfully in Small Christian Communities, Neighbourhood Communities, Parish Pastoral Councils or any other small groups in the parish.

ASIPA TEXTS can also be used with larger groups, e.g. in the parish hall - provided the “participatory method” is maintained in smaller working groups.

Features of the “ASIPA approach”

1. ASIPA TEXTS adopt a **“participatory approach”** in which all participants of a group search and discover for themselves as far as they are able to.
2. The texts are compiled in such a way that the facilitator can use them with a **minimum of preparation**.
3. The facilitator is requested to **follow the text** as closely as possible and allow the participants to contribute when indicated in the text.
4. The facilitator is not content with one answer to a question but he/she encourages as many participants as possible to search for an answer. **“Buzz groups”** of 2/3 are helpful to achieve maximum participation.
5. The **SUPPLEMENT** can help add to the findings of the participants and summarize them.
6. The **SUMMARY** is meant to be used as ‘input’.

ASIPA:

As-ian -I-ntegral -P-astoral -A-pproach

The Asian Bishops declared in the Final Statement of their Fifth Plenary Session in Bandung: The Church of 1990s has to be a "Participatory Church", a "Communion of Communities", a Church that "witnesses to the Risen Lord" (*FABC5,#8*).

The question was, how to promote this "new way of being Church". Therefore, late in 1993, jointly sponsored by the FABC Offices of Human Development and of Laity, a consultation meeting was held in Malaysia. It was during this consultation that the pastoral process for promoting a "Participatory Church" in Asia was termed ASIPA: Asian Integral Pastoral Approach.

ASIPA TEXTS (training programmes) follow this directive:

ASIAN

They want to implement the vision of the Asian Bishops and help Asian Christians face Asian life in the light of the gospel.

INTEGRAL

They aim at achieving a balance between the "spiritual" and the "social", between the individual and the community, between hierarchical leadership and the co-responsibility of the laity.

PASTORAL

They train the laity in their pastoral mission in Church and world.

APPROACH

The process of ASIPA TEXTS can be described as a pastoral approach which is "Christ- and Community centred". It involves the participants of workshops to search for themselves and allows them to experience a "New Way of Being Church."
