

Shout it from the rooftops!

by Deacon Michael Wesley

Every Christian, hence, every prayer group, has been commissioned to share the Good News of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15). Indeed, the new life that Jesus has brought to most Spirit-filled Christians should cause us to shout it from the rooftops! And yet, many of our prayer groups aren't involved with evangelization at all. The reason for this, quite often, is not so much that prayer groups don't want to evangelize, as that they don't know how to do it. Here are several very simple ways to enable our efforts to proclaim the good news and spread the kingdom of God.

The first of these is through the use of advertisements. Frequently, people aren't even aware that our prayer groups exists, let alone the occurrence of a Life in the Spirit Seminar, an anointed guest teacher, a Day of Renewal, or other activity. Most prayer groups have available to them the parish bulletin, bulletin inserts, diocesan newspaper, and announcements at Mass to advertise. Some radio and television stations will promote an event as a public service announcement (PSA). Many newspapers have a community events or religion section that will cover upcoming prayer group activities. Our prayer group has made fliers, business cards, and built a web site to make our ministry known to the general public. Whatever resources are available the important thing is to get the word out. People are hungry for the truth, and if we invite them they will come.

Another effective means for prayer group evangelization is the Life in the Spirit Seminar. This is one of the best means for ministering the baptism in the

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Holy Spirit, and a lack of resources should not impede a prayer group from having one. If there is a shortage of people-power then work together with another prayer group. Prayer groups need to start working together rather than competing with each other. Several small prayer groups, for instance, can have a large, community-wide Life in the Spirit Seminar. They can also work together to hold smaller Seminars at different parishes. There's always an anointing of the Lord when people work together. In some places Seminars are given to high school students as a retreat before Confirmation. This is doubly effective when the parents are invited, or even required to participate in the retreat.

A prayer group can also evangelize by offering special teachings, or other events in the parish. One of our prayer groups has a ministry of praying over people in front of the Blessed Sacrament. This has attracted a number of parishioners. Another local prayer group serves coffee and doughnuts after each of the Sunday Masses for one month every year. They play inspirational music, pass out tracts on the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and have a basket for prayer requests. One year our prayer group held a Lenten mission called, *Experiencing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*. There's always a way of sharing the Good News, but we have to be willing to do it.

The temptation in these times of spiritual leanness is to close in on ourselves

with a false sense of humble acceptance. The truth of the matter is that God, through the Church, is calling us to action. He's calling us to shout from the rooftops the Good News that has transformed our lives. The Good News that we have to share is that Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can transform their lives too. But they will only hear it if we make evangelization a missionary goal of our prayer groups. ♦



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