

SHARING THE JOY
OF THE GOSPEL

'The *Proclaim* initiative invites us to go on an important journey. It is not a short sprint. It is a long haul. Helping our parishes to become missionary parishes, communities of evangelisation, rooted in the mystery of God and sharing in the mission of Jesus himself, is a long process. I hope *Proclaim* adds great momentum to the missionary life and spirit of our Church, adding to a stream of energy and enthusiasm in the life of our parishes for reaching outward with the joy of the Gospel.'

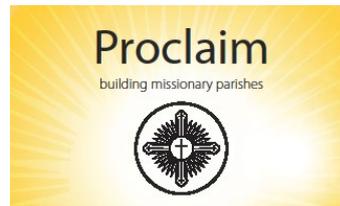
Cardinal
Vincent
Nichols,
Westminster

Proclaim Resources

AN OVERVIEW FOR PARISHES

Introduction

In 2015 the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales launched a significant evangelisation initiative called *Proclaim '15* to support, inspire and encourage new expressions of parish evangelisation. The project was designed to affirm the good work already being done by the Catholic community, and to provide resources and events to profile and develop new expressions of Catholic joy and missionary outreach. The legacy of this initiative extends beyond its launch year and this booklet aims to provide a snapshot of the materials now available.



Proclaim has five parts:

1. PRAYER

Network of prayer - parishes are invited to prioritise praying for evangelisation in their local area.

2. SMALL GROUPS

Materials are provided to encourage Catholics to meet in small parish groups to explore their response to the call to evangelise.

3. EVENT

A National Catholic Evangelisation Conference took place on 11 July

2015 in Birmingham for 850 evangelisation representatives from across England and Wales. As a fruit of this event, new *Proclaim* groups were formed in every diocese to take forward the work of local outreach.

4. LEGACY

Local events - templates have been provided to enable dioceses, deaneries and parishes to have their own *Proclaim* gatherings.

5. RESOURCES

New Evangelisation resources have been made available as a fruit of the National Conference to equip parish evangelisation.

Practical and Enabling

Proclaim has a practical and 'how to' focus because while there is enthusiasm within the Catholic community to share confidently and joyfully our Faith, it can at times be hard to discern

where to begin. This initiative aims to address that difficulty and is inspired by Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, in which he writes: 'I wish to encourage the

Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelisation marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church's journey in years to come.'



Prayer is the foundation of all missionary endeavour.

'Whenever we encounter another person in love, we learn something new about God.'

*Pope Francis,
Evangelii Gaudium*

272

Prioritising Prayer

Cardinal Nichols said at the Proclaim Conference in July 2015: 'To understand our mission then we have to go to the heart of God, the very mystery of the Holy Trinity, the inner life of God... Only from within that inner heart of God does our mission arise. Only from that inner heart of God does our mission find its

shape, its purpose, its energy.'

Prayer is the foundation of all missionary endeavour and you will find on our website a Proclaim prayer that can be reproduced. Some parishes have already used it to create parish prayer cards for distribution. Also available is a template

for a parish evening of prayer. You might also choose to offer an annual Novena at Pentecost in support of your parish mission.

On Home Mission Sunday too – the third Sunday in September – the Bishops invite every parish to pray for the work of evangelisation.

Small Group Materials

Three evangelisation-themed sessions for use in small groups in our parishes are available for download and reproduction.

The sessions are timeless so can be used any time during the year to initiate prayer and

reflection about the foundation stones of Catholic evangelisation.

Each session includes a story, questions to ponder, a Scripture reading, prayer and extract from *Evangelii Gaudium*.

They are themed:

- 1) Meeting Jesus
- 2) A Missionary Disciple
- 3) Jesus is Alive

The materials aim to inspire a practical and local response to the call to share our faith.

Local Events

An ideas and resource booklet is available to support the organisation of local Proclaim events and gatherings in your area.

These events can be of any duration, but should aim to bring people

together to share ideas and receive inspiration in support of local evangelisation.

The resource booklet provides:

- Guidance about what a Proclaim event should include
- Prayer suggestions
- Draft outline for a day programme
- Possible workshop themes



Free Films to Download



Please see: www.catholicnews.org.uk/proclaim

All the talks given at the Proclaim Conference in Birmingham were filmed and are available for free download.

Among those featured are:

- Cardinal Vincent Nichols
- Archbishop Bernard Longley

- Archbishop George Stack
- Bishop Mark O’Toole
- Rev Nicky Gumbel
- Michelle Moran

There are also recordings featuring BSL for deaf people.

‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted.

He has sent me to

proclaim liberty...’

Luke 4:18

Workshops & Top Tips

The Proclaim initiative offers practical insights through the provision of workshop materials and ‘top tips’ sheets, covering eleven themes. Among the topics covered are:

1) Prayer as the foundation of a missionary parish

2) Vision and Strategy for parish evangelisation

3) Ministry and outreach to non churchgoing (lapsed) Catholics

4) Creating a parish evangelisation team

5) Building welcoming and family-friendly parishes

6) Offering prayer experiences as effective outreach

7) Sharing your faith testimony

8) Reaching out to the unchurched

9) Being a poor Church for the poor

Also covered: Youth Ministry and the basic Gospel message.

Parish Evangelisation Teams

It is hoped that the Proclaim initiative will encourage many more parish or deanery evangelisation teams to be formed.

In support of that end, please do consider speaking with your some of your

fellow parishioners and parish priest about how you might go about this.

Ideas are provided on the Proclaim website as part of the Parish Teams workshop.





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**Proclaim is an initiative of the Department
for Evangelisation and Catechesis, Catholic
Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.**

Please do use the materials provided and share this
brochure and the website address with others.

Thank you for your support and please do
remember this initiative in your prayers.

**'Evangelisation takes place in obedience to
the missionary mandate of Jesus: "Go
therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptising them in the name of the Father and
of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe all that I have
commanded you" (Mt 28:19-20). In these
verses we see how the risen Christ sent his
followers to preach the Gospel in every time
and place, so that faith in him might spread
to every corner of the earth.'**

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 19

Proclaim Prayer



Loving Father,
You so loved the world that you sent us
your only Son,
that we might believe in him and have
eternal life.
May we encounter Jesus Christ anew this
day and live the Good News with joy.

Through the power of your Holy Spirit,
help us to "go out to the whole world and proclaim"
our faith with confidence.
Give us the courage to witness to the Joy of the Gospel
by our words and actions.
Help our parish to become more welcoming and
missionary,
so that you may be known and loved by all people.
We make this prayer through Our Lord Jesus Christ
Your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever,
Amen.

Our Lady, Star of the New Evangelisation, Pray for us.

Blessed John Henry Newman, Pray for us.

St Thérèse of Lisieux, Pray for us.