



# Diocese of Rockville Centre New Evangelization

*"... the Church needs genuine witnesses for the new evangelization: men and women whose lives have been transformed by meeting with Jesus, men and women who are capable of communicating this experience to others. The Church needs saints. All are called to holiness, and holy people alone can renew humanity."*

*Pope John Paul II  
August 2004*

Volume II, Issue VIII

Theme: HOPE

January 2008

## ENCOUNTER: With The Lord Jesus

Moving on from there, he went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man there who had a withered hand. They questioned him, "Is it lawful to cure on the Sabbath?" so that they might accuse him. He said to them, "Which one of you who has a sheep that falls into a pit on the Sabbath will not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable a person is than a sheep. So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and it was restored as sound as the other. But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him to put him to death. When Jesus realized this, he withdrew from that place. Many (people) followed him, and he cured them all, but he warned them not to make him known. This was to fulfill what had been spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom I delight; I shall place my spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not contend or cry out, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory. And in his name the Gentiles will hope."

*Matthew 12: 9-21*

### For your reflection:

- I. In these verses, the man with the withered hand follows Jesus' instruction and is healed while the Pharisees confront the person of Jesus and plot to kill Him. One course of action provides hope while the other destroys it. When we encounter Christ, what is in our hearts and minds?
- II. Those who encounter the Lord find hope; those who avoid Him find themselves empty. Do you actively seek the Lord or do you hide from Him?
- III. What do these verses teach you about maintaining hope in the new year?

## CONVERSION: To The Way Of The Lord

And this is the promise that he made us: eternal life. I write you these things about those who would deceive you. As for you, the anointing that you received from him remains in you, so that you do not need anyone to teach you. But his anointing teaches you about everything and is true and not false; just as it taught you, remain in him. And now, children, remain in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not be put to shame by him at his coming. If you consider that he is righteous, you also know that everyone who acts in righteousness is begotten by him. See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope based on him makes himself pure, as he is pure.

*1John2: 25-3:3*

### For your reflection:

- I. We separate ourselves from God, and lose hope, when we stray from the Lord's teachings. Conversion produces hope. What are ways we may use to keep us on the path of conversion of life?
- II. Conversion stems from the conviction that we are the beloved children of the Father. Is your hope in this truth or do you instead seek fulfillment in secular society's image of the human person as not in need of this Father?
- III. Ultimately, all hope comes to us through Christ. In what ways during this new year will you try to become more attached to Him than to sin?

**"SPE SALVI"**

**"SAVED  
BY  
HOPE"**



**EUCCHARIST: "I Am Not Worthy To Receive You"**

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church, of which I am a minister in accordance with God's stewardship given to me to bring to completion for you the word of God, the mystery hidden from ages and from generations past. But now it has been manifested to his holy ones, to whom God chose to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; it is Christ in you, the hope for glory. It is he whom we proclaim, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. For this I labor and struggle, in accord with the exercise of his power working within me.

*Colossian s1:24-29*

**For your reflection:**

- I. Saint Paul identifies and unites his own sufferings with those of Christ. This provides him with the hope needed to endure whatever may happen to him. Receiving Holy Communion could be a similar experience and provide hope for us. Do we reject our sufferings or seek to understand them in light of our deep union with Christ?
- II. These verses also highlight our communion in the Body of Christ with one another. Our sufferings, joined to those of Christ, offer hope and support to those in the Body. Do we "waste" our sufferings by cursing them or do we offer all of who we are and what we are experiencing to the Father as Jesus did in the supreme sacrifice of His life on the cross?
- III. As you enter a new year, how will you approach the altar to receive Holy Communion—as someone who is only receiving or someone who is also giving (i.e., offering themselves for the sake of Christ's Body, the Church)?

**HOLINESS: "So Be Perfect As Your Heavenly Father Is Perfect"**

Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, live soberly, and set your hopes completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Like obedient children, do not act in compliance with the desires of your former ignorance but, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, "Be holy because I (am) holy." Now if you invoke as Father him who judges impartially according to each one's works, conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning, realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, handed on by your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb. He was known before the foundation of the world but revealed in the final time for you, who through him believe in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

*1Peter1:13-21*

**For your reflection:**

- I. Ignorance is not bliss! For to know Christ is the path to happiness and holiness. What is your knowledge of the Catholic Faith compared to the knowledge you have of your favorite hobby?
- II. A holy life testifies to what is to come; not only to what is true now. Do you maintain this hope for eternal life?
- III. During this new year, will you allow God to form a new "you"; a person full of hope in His coming at the end of time to judge the living and the dead?

**MISSION: "You Are Witnesses Of These Things"**

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You may now speak on your own behalf." So Paul stretched out his hand and began his defense. "I count myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that I am to defend myself before you today against all the charges made against me by the Jews, especially since you are an expert in all the Jewish customs and controversies. And therefore I beg you to listen patiently. My manner of living from my youth, a life spent from the beginning among my people and in Jerusalem, all (the) Jews know. They have known about me from the start, if they are willing to testify, that I have lived my life as a Pharisee, the strictest party of our religion. But now I am standing trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors. Our twelve tribes hope to attain to that promise as they fervently worship God day and night; and on account of this hope I am accused by Jews, O king. Why is it thought unbelievable among you that God raises the dead?"

*Acts of the Apostles 26:1-8*



**For your reflection:**

- I. Paul's self defense before the King makes reference to a "before" and "after" scenario that tells of his zeal. "Before", his zeal consisted of destroying Christians. "After", it consisted of promoting Christianity. The difference was his new hope in the resurrection of the dead. Is this Easter message of victory over sin and death part of who we are as Christians? Or have we reduced Christianity to a philosophy or set of moral rules?
- II. People not only ridiculed but also persecuted Paul for this hope in the resurrection that he embraced wholeheartedly. Is your living out of the Faith, your mission in life, able to withstand attacks which come from those who ridicule or persecute? Is your mission in life to be a bearer of the hope that Christ's promise of eternal life offers us?
- III. In this new year, will your hope come from living out and witnessing your Faith to the full? Or will you allow despair to enter due to compromises?

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