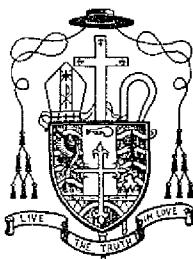


HAMILTON

DIOCESE



Bishop's Office

P. Box 4353
Hamilton East
Hamilton 2032
New Zealand

Telephone 0-7-856 6989
Fax 0-7-856 1215

20 May 1999

**To: All Parish Priests
Parish Councils/Teams**

re: POLICY ON EVANGELISATION

Dear Father/Teams

One of the objectives of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan of 1997 was the development of a diocesan policy on evangelisation.

The task of developing the policy was given to the Commission for Evangelisation and Outreach of the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

Following several months of study and prayerful discussion, the Commission members have prepared a policy document which will provide a guideline for all parishes and organisations in the diocese of Hamilton.

The Commission recognises that this is a first step, and will review the document within a year of publication, to accommodate changing needs and circumstances.

The Policy of Evangelisation has been approved by the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Council of Priests, and now I have pleasure in approving it for use throughout the diocese.

God bless you

Yours sincerely in Christ

✠ Denis Browne
Bishop of Hamilton

EVANGELISATION POLICY FOR THE DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

*“Jesus established the church
to make disciples of all nations”*

This Policy on Evangelisation was prepared for the Diocese of Hamilton by the Commission for Outreach and Evangelisation of the Hamilton Diocesan Pastoral Council in response to *“Priority 3, Objective 2”* of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.

Promulgated by Bishop Denis Browne on
20 May 1999

EVANGELISATION

Sometimes we hear people say - *Have you got any wheels?* They mean have you got a car? When we do this we talk about something, or we define something by some of its parts. Pope Paul VI in ENVANGELII NUNTIANDI said - *Don't do this kind of thing when you are talking about evangelisation. Don't say evangelisation is just proclaiming the good news about Jesus. It is that but it is ever so much more.*

Evangelisation is a complicated process. There are lots of parts to it.

- It is the work of the Blessed Trinity
- It aims to renew the whole of humanity, cultures, society, nations
- It demands personal life witness to Jesus
- There must be a proclaiming of the good news about Jesus Christ
- The message given must be heard, taken to heart and acted upon
- Evangelisation leads to conversion
- The good news received leads to people joining the church family
- Evangelisation leads a person to accept the sacraments and celebrate them
- Every evangelised person becomes an evangeliser

Pope Paul; VI takes seven pages to try and talk about the elements that go to make up evangelisation.

If we are going to understand evangelisation we must keep before ourselves all the bits that go to make it up.

Evangelisation has been defined like this: It is proclaiming Christ to those who do not know Him. It is preaching the good news. It is teaching people catechism. It is baptising people or conferring other sacraments. Yet it is all these things but it is a whole lot more.

Rev. 21:5 - *Now I am making the whole creation new.*

If you have some clothes in a bucket, white clothes, and you put purple dye in with them. All the clothes come out purple. When the church evangelises she wants to make every human person on the earth new. She wants them to be converted to Jesus, to live their lives according to His Gospel, to be baptised, confirmed and welcomes to the Eucharist. When people live their lives in Christ, they change. Then the world changes. Governments change. Laws change. The media changes. The whole world changes. Evangelisation aims to change the whole world by the power of Jesus.

Another example may help us to talk about Evangelisation. We could call the church *An Evangelisation Factory*. The word factory is a bit unusual but stay with it. At factories things are made. The evangelisation factory is where Catholic Christians are made. So we could say that evangelisation is the

making of Catholic Christians. The factory is owned by the Father, by Jesus and by the Holy Spirit. They motivate and empower us in the making of Christians. Many people are involved in the process of making Christians.

As people are converted to Jesus and His Church they change. So too does the way they judge things, the way they think, what they value, what interests them, what inspires, how they live their lives. All these are brought into line with the will of God. Evangelisation is about this. It touches our very culture and all the cultures of the world.

Evangelisation happens when Christians witness by their way of life. How they relate to one another, to the community, to God. What inspires them. Going to church and why. This silent witness is a part of evangelisation.

This is not enough. The Lord Jesus must be proclaimed in a clear understandable way. True evangelisation demands that the name of Jesus be proclaimed, His teaching, His life, His promises, His kingdom, His mystery, His word - all must be spoken out loud and clear. Who can we send to proclaim the mystery of Jesus? How are we going to do it? What do we need to do to reach all who need to hear it? For many, this is evangelisation. But it is only one aspect of it.

Evangelisation demands initiation. Proclamation fails unless people listen, accept and take the message of board. The result of the good news of Jesus is that a person begins to live a new kind of life. This life needs to be lived with others in community, in the Church. It leads to accepting and celebrating the sacraments.

As we live the Christian life under the influence of the Holy Spirit we are enable to do "*good works*" for God. These *good works* are done to give glory to the God who inspired such works. Once a person has been evangelised the cycle begins all over again.

So.....

Get on stream. Join an evangelisation team. Evangelisation is a team effort involving the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The goal is that people will be converted, turn to Jesus and believe in Him. For this to happen, the Father has to attract a person to Jesus. No-one can say - Jesus is Lord without the Holy Spirit. The Blessed Trinity calls us to a part of the work of bringing people to Jesus. Many are the works of evangelisation. Different people are called to do different things. Every Catholic is called to give evangelising witness by the way they live the faith. Each Catholic is also expected to be able to talk to others about Jesus. To answer the question - *Why do I believe what I believe?* People who accept Jesus in their lives need to be initiated into church. This involves many who are already members of the church and who will journey with the new believers and accompany them through the rites that

belong to the Christian Initiation of Adults. Others will need to be Catechists to further to process. The work of those whom God calls to help with evangelisation will never be finished. This is because God never stops inviting new people into his church.

Father Brian Playfair

OUTREACH AND EVANGELISATION COMMISSION

DIOCESAN EVANGELISATION POLICY

POLICY 1. THE CALL TO PRAYER AND HOLINESS WILL BE A KEYSTONE OF PASTORAL PRACTICE IN THE DIOCESE

Implementation

- 1.1 To call upon the Holy Spirit to empower and direct the work of evangelisation by:**
 - a) Aiming for everyone to pray and understand that prayer is a gift from God
 - b) Acknowledge existing prayer groups
 - c) Setting up a prayer group to focus on evangelisation in each Parish
 - d) Encouraging people to set aside prayer times during the day to focus on specific needs/people
 - e) Providing a leaflet of suggested prayers and practices
- 1.2 The process of evangelisation can be assisted by:**
 - a) Effective telephone networks being established using prayer chains
 - b) Setting up prayer relationships, retreats and days of reconciliation
 - c) Inspirational speakers being used to motivate people and lead them in prayer
 - d) Using spiritual tapes to motivate people to prayer
 - e) Drawing people's attention to the use of travelling time as a time for prayer
 - f) The setting up of a Parish Evangelisation Group that emphasises the outward mission of the Church

POLICY 2. ALL CATHOLICS IN THE DIOCESE WILL BE SUPPORTED AND ASSISTED TO ACT AS WITNESSES TO THE TRUTH PROCLAIMED BY CHRIST

Implementation

- 2.1 All Catholics will be encouraged to become active disciples of Jesus by having:**
 - a) Adequate resources provided
 - Tapes
 - Videos
 - Missions
 - Internet material
 - b) Sacraments of Initiation implemented throughout the Diocese
 - c) Neighbourhood groups along BEC lines
 - d) An involvement in the '*good works*' of the Church eg, St Vincent de Paul Society, Legion of Mary
- 2.2 Events are organised and promoted to develop discipleship:**
 - a) Evangelisation weekends
 - b) Regional cluster meetings
 - c) National Conventions
 - d) Diocesan events
- 2.3 To promote the Baptismal call in each Catholic to evangelise by:**
 - a) Showing ourselves visibly, eg, wearing a cross/fish
 - b) Witnessing in our homes, neighbourhoods and workplaces

- c) Maintaining the interest of the youth and young people by providing appropriate Liturgies/activities
- d) Assisting parents to teach '*God's Word*' (Scripture) to their children
- 2.4 All Catholics will be encouraged to be familiar with and promote the RCIA
- 2.5 To encourage the convergent model of Parish/School working together

POLICY 3. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE DIOCESE OF HAMILTON WILL BE COMMITTED TO EVANGELISATION

Implementation

- 3.1 **Bishop Dennis Browne calls the Diocese to evangelisation by:**
 - a) Promoting evangelisation on Parish visitations
 - b) Ensuring the Leaders of the Diocese continue to lead the people in prayer
 - c) Promoting the concept of a decade of evangelisation
 - d) Producing a video declaring the importance of evangelisation
- 3.2 **The Outreach and Evangelisation Commission will provide leadership through networking with Parishes and providing resources**
- 3.3 **Catholic Schools will ensure that they are at the forefront of evangelisation**
- 3.4 **Evangelisation in the Diocese will be publicised by:**
 - a) A declaration/statement
 - b) Kete korero
 - c) Parish contacts
 - d) Parish newsletter
 - e) Producing an Evangelisation kit

POLICY 4. CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES WILL DEVELOP A SPIRIT OF WELCOME AND HOSPITALITY

Implementation

- 4.1 **To encourage a Fellowship Ministry by:**
 - a) Having greeters at Masses
 - b) Welcoming new Parishioners
 - c) Having Parish Social activities
 - d) Visiting Parishioners
 - e) Inviting all known Catholics to certain Liturgical highlights, eg, Christmas, Easter
- 4.2 **To ensure the Liturgies of the Church are meaningful and purposeful to the people, working in conjunction with the Diocesan Liturgy Group**
- 4.3 **To establish a connection with Catholics who are no longer regular Church attenders by:**
 - a) Visitations
 - b) Providing newsletter at strategic times of the year

4.4 To re-evangelise lapsed Catholics

POLICY 5. TRAINING PROGRAMMES WILL BE PROVIDED/OFFERED FOR THOSE WORKING IN THE AREA OF EVANGELISATION

Implementation

- 5.1 To convince people of the need to trust God and understand that they are in partnership with Him in the Mission of Evangelisation
- 5.2 To assist people in developing confidence to evangelise through:
 - a) Prayer
 - b) Bible study
 - c) Inspirational speakers
 - d) Liturgical services
 - e) Role plays
 - f) Workshops
 - g) Participation in small groups with formative programmes
- 5.3 To train people to recognise '*the teachable moment*' and act as a witness
- 5.4 To provide assistance to Parishes in the work of evangelisation by:
 - a) Setting up a Parish contact network
 - b) Providing plans and resources for Parishes to use
- 5.5 To involve appropriate Diocesan Commissions to assist people to accept leadership in the evangelisation process, eg Formation for Ministry, Spiritual and Liturgical Renewal

POLICY 6. A HEALING MINISTRY WILL BE DEVELOPED IN THE DIOCESE

Implementation

- 6.1 The Healing Ministry of the Church will be seen as part of the process of Evangelisation
- 6.2 The Church will respond to the '*hurts*' of people through:
 - a) Prayer in the name of Jesus
 - b) Helping people to find spiritual healing
 - c) Friendly contact
- 6.3 Leaders will be trained to respond to the spiritual needs of people in the Diocese
- 6.4 People will be encouraged to open up to the Holy Spirit as a means of healing, using appropriate means

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Commission for Outreach and Evangelisation will prepare an Annual Plan to set priorities and specific objectives for implementation of the policy.

ANNUAL PLAN FOR 1999

- Establish a network of parish contacts
- Encourage formation of evangelisation prayer groups
- To establish a School of Evangelisation offering courses on Discipleship and Evangelisation.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy document will be reviewed annually in November in conjunction with a review and evaluation of the Annual Plan. Any changes or additions will be referred to the Diocesan Pastoral Council.