

Series Title: IMPACTERS - Who We Are

Week 4 (23 Feb 2025)

Summary:

This Message explores the vital role of lay people in the Church, emphasizing their unique vocation to seek God's kingdom in everyday life. Drawing from Vatican II documents, particularly Lumen Gentium, the Message challenges the notion that holiness is confined to Church activities. Instead, it asserts that lay people are called to sanctify the world (make holy) through their daily lives, work, and relationships. The message encourages believers to be the hands, feet, and voice of Christ in all aspects of life, living as witnesses to transform the world around them.

Key Points:

- Lay people have a special vocation to seek God's kingdom in worldly affairs.
- Holiness is found in everyday life, not just in Church activities.
- Lay people are called to make the world holy through their daily actions and decisions.
- Being a witness for Christ involves using our hands (actions), feet. (intentional outreach), and voice (give a reason for your hope/faith).
- The importance of living a life that prompts others to ask about our faith.
- The challenge to be "always on" as disciples of Christ.
- The need for intentional evangelization and stepping out of the "church bubble."

Scripture Reference:

- Matthew 5:16 - "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."
- 1 Peter 3:15 - "Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you."

Stories:

- The analogy of bringing Christ into a football stadium simply by being present.
- The experience of family members returning to faith after years of witnessing Bruce's Christian life.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can we actively seek the kingdom of God in our everyday affairs and worldly responsibilities, as emphasized in the Vatican II document?
- In what ways can lay people 'make the world holy' through their daily lives and occupations, and how might this change our perspective on holiness?
- How can we balance being 'in the world but not of the world' while still effectively witnessing to others through our actions and words?
- What are some practical ways we can use our 'hands, feet, and voice' to proclaim the gospel in our personal and professional environments?
- How might our approach to evangelization change if we truly embraced the idea that we are 'carriers' of God's presence wherever we go?
- What barriers or fears prevent us from being more intentional about sharing our faith, and how can we overcome them?
- How can we cultivate a lifestyle that prompts others to ask about 'the hope that is in us,' as mentioned in 1 Peter 3:15?
- In what ways might our understanding of 'ministry' need to shift based on the teachings presented about the role of lay people in the church?
- How can we maintain an 'always on' mentality in our Christian walk without burning out or becoming inauthentic?
- What would it look like to truly live as 'leaven' in our families, workplaces, and communities, and what challenges might we face in doing so?

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SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Opening Prayer: Have a group member open in prayer, asking God to guide your discussion and help apply the sermon's teachings.

Key Takeaways:

1. Lay people have a special vocation to seek God's kingdom in everyday life and work.
2. Holiness is found not just in church, but in our homes, workplaces, and daily interactions.
3. We are called to be Christ's hands (action), feet (intentionality), and voice (give a reason for your hope/faith) in the world.
4. Our witness is primarily through how we live our lives, not just what we say.

Discussion Questions:

1. The sermon emphasized that lay people should "seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal, worldly and everyday affairs." How does this challenge or affirm your current understanding of your Christian calling?
2. Reflect on the statement: "You make the world holy by fulfilling the particular duties that you have." How might this change how you approach your work, family life, or other responsibilities?
3. Bruce said, "Stop looking for a ministry. Just stop it." What was your initial reaction to this statement? How might it reshape your understanding of Christian service?
4. Discuss the three ways we're called to give expression to our faith: hands, feet, and voice. Which of these do you find easiest? Most challenging? Why?
5. How might viewing yourself as "always on" as a Christian disciple change your daily behavior or decision-making?
6. The sermon suggested that some people will never come to Christ unless we go to them. Who in your life might God be calling you to reach out to, even if it seems difficult or unlikely?

Practical Applications:

1. This week, choose one area of your life (work, family, hobby) and intentionally look for ways to "make it holy" through your actions and attitudes.

2. Practice being more intentional about your Christian witness. Each day, ask yourself: "How can I be Christ's hands, feet, or voice in this situation?"
3. Share your faith journey with the group. How has Christ changed your life? Practice articulating this clearly and concisely.
4. Identify one person in your life who seems disconnected from faith. Commit to praying for them daily and looking for opportunities to show Christ's love in practical ways.

Closing Prayer: Close by praying for each other, asking God to help you live out your calling as lay people in the world, being Christ's hands, feet, and voice in your everyday lives.