



NEW EVANGELISATION NEEDS “JOYFUL” EVANGELIZERS

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On Saturday, a meeting titled; "New Evangelizers for the New Evangelization - The Word of God grows and spreads", organized by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization takes place here at the Vatican. Held in the New Synod Hall, the meeting starts with a report by the Council President, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, and will proceed with discussion among Church leaders involved in “New Evangelization”.

Saturday afternoon the meeting will continue in the Paul VI Hall with a series of interventions by guest speakers, followed by a short concert by world renowned tenor Andrea Bocelli. Pope Benedict XVI is due to join participants and address the meeting Saturday evening.

Speaking to Vatican Radio, Archbishop Fisichella stated that the aim of the meeting is to “present the representatives of the various church realities who, for some time now, have been carrying out the new evangelisation to Pope Benedict”. “Let us not forget”- he adds, - “ that the event is taking place in the month dedicated to mission – October”. The theme of the meeting is also important he says; “we want to visibly present the Church with the new evangelisers, because in this way we make the Word of God known and we can increase the disciples of the Lord”.

As a practical example of this, on Saturday evening different groups, different ecclesial realities will go out onto the streets of Rome, to the historic squares, and churches to carry out the work of new evangelization. “Many of these ecclesial groups already have

experience of this," - points out Archbishop Fisichella - "they will give the city of Rome, a visible sign of a new evangelization. And we hope that their efforts will bear fruit".

In the Italian prelates' opinion, the meeting is one of many contributions in the lead up to the 2012 Synod of Bishops on new evangelization, because it will help bishops around the world to understand that new evangelization has already been going on for some time: "The new evangelization was not born because the Holy See established a new department; for 27 years Blessed John Paul II "provoked" the Church in every possible way into recognizing the urgent need for new evangelization. Pope Benedict XVI, with a truly prophetic act, instituting the Pontifical Council, wanted the different realities - those that already exist and those that will arise in the future – to find a common point of reference, in short, a concrete expression of the service of the Pope for the Church in favour of the new evangelization. So, I would say that the synod will witness already extremely positive experiences: just think that thousands of these [new evangelizers – ed] are young people, so there is also the enthusiasm of the many young people who are already living this experience!

The meeting will also reflect on the Synod "Lineamenta", or guidelines. Archbishop Fisichella says that particular attention will be paid to the role of the family which he says "obviously must take first place". Other areas include the liturgy, commitment and action in the field of politics, culture, mass media and social communications. However special focus, he reveals, will be given to immigration: "For new evangelization, this is certainly a factor to be taken seriously, because we have millions of Christians on the move in different countries, bringing with them not only the richness of their Christian experience, but who also come to meet the challenges which Europe in particular but also the United States present, with regards to secularization".

According to Archbishop Fisichella, this Saturday's meeting together with the Lent 2012 campaign "Mission Metropolis" are signs of the goals that the Pontifical Council has set for itself, but above all signs for the upcoming Synod and the Church. "The aim is to promote awareness and knowledge of the experience of new evangelisation through these initiatives", he says but also to quash still existent illusions that "everything was alright in the past, or that everything will be fine in the future" thanks to the invention of a "new formula". Through these initiatives, he concludes, "we want to reinforce that evangelisation is the very mission of the Church and it has been going on for over two thousand years, but it needs to find a new language, a new lifestyle one that is respectful but has a deeply rooted identity", evangelisers "who have a profound sense of belonging to the Church and the Christian community but at the same time who are open to others. And also a good dose of joy and enthusiasm, which is never a bad thing!".