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## REFLECTIONS

# MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

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## *The New Evangelization: A Personal, Family, and Professional Response*

God is first manifested in the family and evangelization is rooted here. When children see the deep love of parents, they receive a glimpse of God's love. In *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis reminds us that we first experience evangelization in the love and joy of family living. As he says, "Love opens our eyes and enables us to see, beyond all else, the great worth of a human being" (*Amoris Laetitia* 128).

Since the family plays a vital role in developing a "culture of faith," where the love of God pulsates, evangelists place high priority on family life. This reflection **begins** with the family, which is in the forefront of all evangelizing efforts. **Next**, we focus on listening, which Pope Francis says is key to effective evangelization. **Finally**, we consider our attitude and how it influences our proclamation of God's Word.

### FAMILY

In reflecting on family life, we remember Saint John Paul II's words, "The *Christian family*,... makes up a natural and fundamental school for formation in the faith: ..." (*Christifideles Laici* 62). Evangelization starts here. We are encouraged to apply these words to our families. When we recognize God's presence in our homes, it's easier to show others how the new evangelization connects with the family.



## LISTENING

Pope Francis urges Catholic evangelists to create a culture of encounter and dialogue. He says, "Dialogue is essential for experiencing, expressing and fostering love in marriage and family life" (*Amoris Laetitia* 136). For him, to encounter means to enter a personal relationship, centered on Jesus. For this to happen, listening to the personal needs of others is vital. To focus on the interpersonal, we are invited to ask ourselves if we are good listeners. Often, it is easy to fall into a rut and fail to hear what a child, spouse, or friend is telling us. This applies to listening beyond the spoken words to the joys and sorrows that others manifest. When we listen, the Word of God can more easily flow in the conversation.

## NEW ATTITUDE

When evangelizing, a positive faith-filled attitude is essential. As missionary disciples focused on proclaiming the Good News, we can regard our personal, home, and professional dealings as opportunities to reflect a hopeful attitude consistent with the new evangelization.

This attitude starts with an enthusiastic desire to be a disciple of the new evangelization. This means working from a faith perspective while going about our daily tasks, whatever they may be, and inviting others to see that Jesus is at the heart of the new evangelization. As we do so, we remember Jesus' words in John's Gospel, "Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, ..." (John 15:5).

# QUESTION

**What aspect of this reflection speaks to you in your personal life, family, or professional work?**