THE LAYPERSON IN THE CHURCH
THE LAYPERSON IN THE CHURCH
SYNTHESIS OF ITS CONTENT AND CHARACTERISTIC NOTES

THEME

The layperson is someone who is sanctified by practicing, with responsibility and conscience, the task of being a person in the Church, using his freedom as a point of entry to transform the world according to Christ, sacrificing whatever is necessary in order that he/she should be truly free, but without the risk of giving up his/her own free will.

The layperson is called to be a living testimony of the Gospel in his/her everyday life, by means of radiating the reality of his/her life in Grace in all facets of their life, rather than serving as a perennial assistant, often becoming a complication to those who preach the Gospel.

NOTE

One must take care that this rollo is neither clerical nor anti-clerical, but maintains a proper balance of what it is to be an authentic Christian.

THE CHURCH

The Church is not a building of stone but Christ in history who desires to continue His Work in those living in Him.

Composed of:
- Its ministers – the official depositories of the revealed truth with the task of transmitting it.
- The Laity – "Men constituted in their inviolable integrity as the living images of God; men who are proud of their personal dignity and their healthy freedom."
- Mission of the Laity: To personify (incarnate) Christ in all circumstances of life.

Characteristics of their Mission:
- Human: The Christian must be fully human in order to achieve the miracle of normality to do the same thing as others, but to do it more fully.
- Supernatural: The supernatural does not consist in life after death; but living life to the fullest during our lifetime.
- Apostolic: The apostolate consists in the salvation of those around us.
- Hierarchical: The hierarchy is the backbone of the Mystical Body of Christ.

"The Christian is a joy, a joy for God and a joy for other people" (Pope John XXIII).

SITUATION

It is the first rollo in the afternoon on the first day. Normally not all are living in Grace. Neither are they open to listening attentively. Despite these disadvantages, with the help
of the friendship that has started, and the newness of the truths that have been revealed, it is possible to keep a keen interest. It is best if it doesn't last too long.

ATMOSPHERE

The general atmosphere is still cold. Ideal disturbed most of the candidates, but “Habitual Grace” will probably have had a calming effect by presenting the potential of a better life.

OBJECTIVE

To get across the concept that the Church is not just the building one enters through the "big door"; but is that which Christ desires of them—let Christ live in them becoming a wellspring of His life.

TECHNIQUE

The rollista should stick to the simple points in the outline and develop them with living force.

STYLE

This rollo must be given in a manner that is composed, calm, convinced, and in such a way that it is capable of catching the interest of those listening in spite of the fact that it is given after lunch when they may be tired. The truths must be stated clearly and with the proper perspective. The truths must be to the point and directed like arrows that will penetrate their mind.
THE LAYPERSON IN THE CHURCH
OUTLINE

1. INTRODUCTION
   A. Today our society is troubled by grave problems: War, hunger, violence, discrimination, social injustice, etc.
   B. These problems are only symptoms.
   C. The only solution to the problems of the world lies in Jesus Christ.

2. WHAT IS THE CHURCH?
   A. It is not the buildings of stone, but Christ in history who desires to continue His Work in those living in Him. The world is full of things that are not good (nuclear weapons, etc.) and its salvation is linked to the Church.
   B. The people of God are the light, salt and ferment of the world.
   C. This mending (restoration) of the world is the primary work the Church must accomplish through two different but essential angles:
      (1) The transformation of people by God's Grace.
      (2) The transformation of the world by those living in Grace.

   The first one belongs to the Clergy.
   The second belongs to the Laity.

   Therefore, the Church is formed by priests, religious, and laity and one cannot advance without the other. All pursue the same end from different angles in which the will of the Father has placed them.

   Since we who are present at this Cursillo® are laypersons, we will look at the part that corresponds to us in the Church.

3. WHAT THE LAYPERSON IS NOT
   The layperson is neither Clerical nor Anti-Clerical.
   Clerical (priestly wannabes).
   There are two types of personalities within this group:
   - They seem to "worship the ground" the priest walks on; often giving more importance to what Father says than to what the Word of God says.
   - They seem to be the type that "talk the walk", but definitely do not "walk the talk"—lots of talk, no action.
   Anti-Clerical (clerophobes)
   - They don't like the clergy simply because they are clergy.
4. WHAT THE LAYPERSON IS

Definition: A person who imagines and lives his life in the world according to Christ.

Pope Pius XII defined it as: “men constituted in their inviolable integrity as the living images of God; men who are proud of their personal dignity and their healthy freedom.”

5. THE SPECIFIC MISSION OF THE LAYPERSON

The consecration of the world depends on the layperson, that is, to personify Christ in all circumstances of life; family, work, play, etc. (Pope Pius XII).

A. The mission of each layperson is derived from our Baptism, Confirmation, and from the common element and virtue of love. St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, Chapter 3, verse 27, says: "You were baptized in union with Christ and now you are clothed so to speak with the life of Christ Himself.”

B. The mission, this role of the layperson in the mission of the Church, is to be exercised in the world and for the world.

Pope John Paul II states that the Lord has entrusted a great part of the responsibility of the Church's mission to the lay faithful, in communion with all other members of the people of God. (Christifideles Laici #32)

Paul VI reminds us in Evangelii Nuntiandi (#70) "Their primary and immediate task is not to establish and develop the ecclesial community—this is the specific role of the pastors—but to put to use every Christian and evangelical possibility latent but already present and active in the affairs of the world. Their own field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media."

C. We should become not only bearers of the Gospel, but persons that truly live its message. When a Christian does not speak of Christ and of His message, it is a sure sign that the person is not convinced of the importance of Christianity. It is not a matter of always speaking about Christ, but rather being filled with his Grace in a way that it flows through our pores.

6. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAYPERSON'S MISSION

A. Human: They must put their gifts and talents at the service of Christ in order to spread the Kingdom of God. The Christian must be fully human in order to attain the miracle of the everyday doing the same as the rest of the world, but doing it well.

B. Supernatural: The supernatural is not life after death, but living life to the full during our lifetime. Our kingdom is not of this world, although it gives fullness and value to the kingdoms of this world. The only thing that counts is the effectiveness of our lives, especially on the people around us and God's judgment.

C. Ecclesial: This means that it is the work of the whole Church.

D. Apostolic: The apostolate consists in the salvation of those around us. We can't shut ourselves off from the world.
7. CONCLUSION

Each person has the capacity to discover and accomplish the Truth and Goodness in the world, but if he doesn’t discover it, he can’t accomplish it. Each one of us in our lives, depending on our personality and our circumstances, must give the truth and goodness to the world. This is our mission as Laypersons. It gives us an opportunity to live the Gospel in grace.

To serve the Church in this way by transforming the world by living in Grace.

To be authentic Christians, as described by John XXIII:

"The Christian is a joy, a joy to himself; to God and to his fellow men."
This rollo should be presented with "liveliness and vitality" and yet should not be "a profound theological discourse." This instruction is the key to the whole approach of the rollo. The participants do not need a lot of theory. They need to feel the importance of the apostolate in their life.

The rollo presents a vision of God's call to them and the purpose for their life as Christians. The rollista should show his/her own feeling of excitement over having a part in God's kingdom—a part that is his/her very own and cannot be done by anybody else.

What it is intended with this rollo is not to teach the whole doctrine of the "Mystical Body of Christ", but of emphasizing the mission of the laity as a living and operative member of the Church. The rollista should avoid too much theory, steer clear of complexities and avoid discussing, at length, theological questions. To do so will keep the participants from confronting themselves. The participants should see and hear in the rollista the importance and excitement of the apostolate rather than hear a refined theory on the subject.

The rollista should stick to the simple points in the outline and develop them with living force. Layperson is not designed to be a witness rollo. Those hearing the presentation are to grasp the mission in the world, not necessarily how the rollista is living it out. They will hear this in the rollo that follows. It must explain some important ideas: that the Church has been sent by Christ to give life to human society, that each layperson has a part in the mission of the Church and should be an active apostle: "to personify Christ in all circumstances of life: family, work, play, etc." Each point should be developed and established by authoritative reference from the Documents of the Second Vatican Council, or from Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelization in the Modern World, and Pope John Paul II's Christifideles Laici and other Apostolic Exhortations from other Popes.

Layperson should give witness to the importance of Christianity and the apostolic life, but it should not be on a personal level. The first day of the Cursillo® is very general (until the Piety rollo), and the approach of the outline is very careful in not telling the participant how to live as a Christian and an apostle. The participants at this point are wary of any attempts to convert them. The approach should be one of sketching the attractiveness and the greatness of the Christian ideal.

The rollista must be careful of the kinds of examples used. It is good to convey in a personal way what the apostolate means to the rollista but not to illustrate how to be an apostle in the way the Action and the Study of Environment rollos will.

As preparation for this rollo, the rollista should study and become thoroughly familiar with the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, and Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity from the Documents of the II Vatican Council, as well as Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelization in the Modern World, of which Chapters I and II and section number 70 could stand alone as a commentary on this rollo, and Pope Paul II’s Christifideles Laici. An excellent book to use to increase the understanding of the lay apostolate is His Way by Father David Knight.
It is not necessary to quote all or most of the Papal documents and/or Scripture references. They are intended to provide the presenter with a broad view of the Church's perspective regarding the place and role of the laity.

**PREPARING THE ROLLO**

Section 1 – the Introduction begins making the cursillistas to look out to all the world and its great problems and great aspirations. Even more important, Section 1-B and I-C makes one simple assertion—that the problems that face the world today are only symptoms. And that the unique radical solution to our problems and to the problems of the world is Jesus.

This section makes them see the urgency and importance of the lay apostolate. There is no better answer and solution than this to the problems that face today's world. Each problem must be handled in Christ. Although the transformation of the world does not automatically happen by simply turning to Christ. But nevertheless, Christ must be the foundation of every life and of all of society.

Section 2, briefly, intends to explain what the Church is. Previous manuals spent a great deal of time trying to explain the immensity of such an important point, "the Church". What is intended is to clear up some very basic points. One must leave behind the idea and the superficial concept they may have about the Church. It is not the structure. It is not the stone nor the temple or chapel. It is greater than that.

This section touches briefly about the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ; it is not until subsequent rollos where this subject will be expanded in greater detail. The Church is Christ in history who desires to continue His work in those living in Him. The Church is the people of God—Light, salt and ferment of the world. "You are the salt of the world."

In other words, one must clearly state that although the Church has a hierarchical structure; the Church is the community of all who live in union with Christ. Therefore the Church is formed of priests and laity, and one cannot advance without the other. Both pursue the same objective, from their different places in which the will of the Father has placed them.

Section 3 specifies what the layperson is not. It explains that being a layperson is not about assuming the role of the Priest. The rollista should be careful, and avoid giving the impression that to be an apostle one must belong to some apostolic organization or participate in the liturgical or catechetical apostolate. The apostolate is being presented in the *Cursillo* in the context of "an element and instrument of Prophetic Pastoral Action and, within this, of the Kerygmatic Ministry" (FI #652). So the emphasis in this rollo is in the call to be an apostle in the world. The rollista should avoid directing the participants through personal examples.

Section 4 explains what indeed a layperson is. Laypersons are all the baptized except those in Holy Orders. We are in contact with the family, our job, politics, society, etc. *A layperson sanctifies himself/herself exercising, with responsibility and conscience, the meaning of being Church, utilizing his/her freedom as point of departure to transform the world according to Christ."

Section 5 is the central message of the rollo. Although the layperson has an active role in building up the Church, they also have a special role within the mission of the Church. The rollo then proceeds to consider what the layperson's mission actually is. The mission
of the layperson derives from their Baptism, their Confirmation, and the virtue of love. The same point is made in the "Constitution of the Church", article #33. It would be a good idea to cite some other documents of the Church and some Papal Encyclical. For example:

Pius XII tells us: "The consecration of the world depends on the layperson; that is: to incarnate Christ in all the circumstances of life: family, work, play, etc." Our field is where God has placed us to carry out our mission.

Pope John Paul II stated that "The Lord has entrusted a great part of the responsibility of the Church's mission to the lay faithful, in communion with all other members of the people of God" (CL #32).

Lay people, whose particular vocation places them in the midst of the world and in charge of the most varied temporal tasks, must for this very reason exercise a very special form of evangelization.

Their primary and immediate task is not to establish and develop the ecclesial community—this is the specific role of the Pastors—but to put to use every Christian and evangelical possibility latent but already present and active in the affairs of the world. Their own field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society, and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts... (On Evangelization in the Modern World #70).

One of the key points to be made in this rollo is the wide scope of the lay apostolate. Most participants will mentally tend to restrict the apostolate to doing "Church" things, to the point of not even hearing the term "world" in its broad meaning. Much misunderstanding can be prevented later on if the vision of transforming the societal world is clearly presented and understood during this rollo. The problem is so pervasive that it may be a good idea for the rollista to leave the participants with a leading question concerning the place of the lay apostolate in everyday living. The group leaders could use the discussion as a time to clarify, if necessary, or use the tone of the discussion to provide the team with a better insight as to the flow of the weekend—is the lay apostolate understood in its broad meaning?

Section 6 continues the description by means of some characteristics of the mission of the laity. This part is designed to clear up some misconceptions about the mission of the layperson, and to emphasize certain aspects of it. The mission is:

- Human – The Christian layperson should live a normal life; at work, with family and friends. To be a layperson, is to do the same as others do, only to do it better. It is not necessary to do heroic things. Their goal should be to live a life of holiness in today's world according to the marvelous truths explained in the rollo of Actual Grace: to be, by Grace, children of God, brothers/sisters of Christ and living temples of the Holy Spirit.

- Supernatural – the supernatural is not life after death; but living life to the full during our lifetime. This point clears up that "supernatural" is not something out of our reach, to the contrary, God is here present, and those who find Him will find a fuller life in the here and now.

- Ecclesial – This means that it is the work of the whole Church, no one is excluded from this mission. This point lays the foundation for a collaboration between the layperson and clergy. There is a unity of mission, though a diversity of functions.
• Apostolic – the purpose of this part is to define the concept of apostle and therefore, our mission as laypersons – apostles in the world – today. Being an apostle is not a special activity. We do not have to join an organization and then begin to do new things, apostolic things – "apostolate". Rather it is a matter which concerns our whole life, our daily living. Wherever we are, we should constantly be trying to draw the world to Christ.

When a Christian does not speak about Christ and about the things of Christ, it is a sign that he is not convinced of the importance of his/her Christianity.

An apostle is a herald of the truth which he/she knows. An apostle does a great deal more than to give a good example. He/She lives a certain way so that others can see a good way of life. The Christian wants to bring others to know and accept certain facts, certain truths, truths which can change their lives.

Duration: Not more than 35 minutes.
LAYPERSON IN THE CHURCH
SAMPLE ROLLO
(35 MINUTES)

1. INTRODUCTION

This morning in the first rollo "Ideal" we were asked to reflect and to consider what we live for. In the second rollo, "Habitual Grace", ________ presented to us the "Ideal of the ideals"; to consider the new life God offers us. We will discuss our role as laypeople in this rollo entitled "The Layperson in the Church."

A. Today our society is troubled by grave problems: War, hunger, violence, discrimination, social injustice, etc.; at the same time it has great aspirations such as: peace, freedom, justice, brotherhood and unity...

The following is an example:

The problems in our society seem never-ending. We have many programs and shelters for the poor and homeless set up in our cities and towns, yet we continue to see so many people on the streets. One reason this happens is because the information, the help, and the money they need has not filtered down to them. As a consequence, homelessness and poverty continue to exist and, in some cases, grow. We have clinics for substance abuse, but the drugs are still waiting on the streets when the treatment ends. We have prisons for criminal offenders to punish and rehabilitate them but the prisons themselves are so violent and overcrowded that many inmates leave the prison with more problems than when they were sent there. There are many more examples that could be mentioned and we are all aware of them. If we concentrate on these problems we could become very depressed.

B. These problems are only symptoms.

Human solutions have failed miserably in solving these problems. The mere essence of Christianity is being attacked... The root of the world's troubles lies in its separation from God. The world is not living in Grace; it lives with its back turned to Christ.

C. The radical and only solution to the problems of the world lies in Jesus Christ. And Christ continues to be present in the world, in and through the Church.

2. WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

A. It is not buildings of stone, but rather something alive... it is people. The question comes to mind—what is the Church and what makes it what it is? When we look at a Church from the outside, we see a building made of stone and bricks. Some with stained glass windows and a cross on the roof. This is a visible sign that this building has some religious significance. It is similar to what we see when we look at each other from the outside. We see bodies and faces. The shells that hold us together. This is a visible sign that we are seeing another human being. But inside our bodies we find our hearts and brains and all the other organs and tissue that enable us to live each day. Without these parts we would not be alive. It is the same with the Church. It is what is inside the building of stone and
brick that makes the Church come alive. It is the people who pray and worship there that makes up the Church, the Body of Christ.

B. The Church is the people of God—the light, salt and leaven of the world. It is born of the evangelizing activity of Jesus and the twelve. It is the same Christ as the one in history, the Body of Christ... alive and real.

The Church then is the reservoir of those who believe, hope, and love. It is this community of believers united in the spreading of hope and realizing the love of God, and the love of other people.

NOTE: Rollista may provide an example of what it means to be Church. The rollista should give example not personal witness. The following is an example:

When Pope John Paul II visited Colorado a few years ago, he spoke to the thousands of young people gathered there. A young woman was interviewed following the Pope's visit. She was asked how it felt to be present with so many people to hear the Pope's message. She said it was good to be encouraged by the Pope, but it was so nice to meet other young people from different backgrounds and regions of the country, yet sharing the same faith. She said, "Here, it's just one big Church."

This statement says it all. This is what the Church is all about... people who are alive with faith and spirit. So it only follows that I am the Church, you are the Church, and together we are the Church.

C. This mending of the world (to make it better) is the primary work the Church must accomplish through two angles:

(1) The transformation of people by God's Grace.

(2) The transformation of the world by those living in Grace.

The first one belongs to the Clergy.

The second belongs to the Laity.

Therefore, the Church is formed by both the Clergy and the laity, and the one cannot advance without the other. Both pursue the same end, from different angles, in which the will of the Father has placed them. Since we who are present at this Cursillo® are laypersons, we will look at the part that corresponds to us in the Church.

3. WHAT THE LAYPERSON IS NOT

The layperson is neither Clerical nor Anti-Clerical.

Clerical (priestly wannabes).

There are two types of personalities within this group:

- They seem to "worship the ground" the priest walks on; often giving more importance to what Father says than to what the Word of God says.
- They seem to be the type that "talk the walk", but definitely don't "walk the talk"—lots of talk, no action.
Anti-Clerical (clerophobes).
- They don't like the clergy simply because they are clergy.

4. WHAT THE LAYPERSON IS

**Definition:** A person who imagines and lives his life in the world according to Christ.
- A person who lives the Gospel despite the "ups and downs" of life. Their Christian ideas do not remain theories; they permeate life itself.
- A person who is constantly confronting the risk of freedom of decision–his/her fidelity to the Gospel. This is his/her only illumination to his/her decisions.
- A person who learns to navigate with the essentials of his faith, trusting that this same faith will enable him with all the resources to overcome all the obstacles of daily life by exercising his/her freedom with humility.

Pius XII defines it as: "men constituted in their inviolable integrity as the living images of God; men who are proud of their personal dignity and their healthy freedom."

5. THE SPECIFIC MISSION OF THE LAYPERSON

"The consecration of the world depends on the layperson" (Pius XII), that is: to personify Christ in all circumstances of life: family, work, play, etc. If we are the Church, then together as Church we have a mission.

A. The mission of each layperson is derived from our Baptism, Confirmation, and from the commandment and virtue of love. St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, Chapter 3, verse 27, says: "You were baptized in union with Christ and now you are clothed so to speak with the life of Christ himself:"

B. The mission, this role of the layperson in the mission of the Church, is to be exercised in the world and for the world. We cannot avoid the world and perform our role only with those with whom we feel comfortable. It is not solely a role performed within the Church or its associations and parochial communities. The redemptive work of Jesus extends to every aspect of life. It extends to our families, friendships, work situations, and social gatherings. It is necessary for us to bring the "Good News" through our witness. Remember, there is no other solution to the problems of the world.

Pope John Paul II states that "the Lord has entrusted a great part of the responsibility of the Church's mission to the lay faithful, in communion with all other members of the people of God." (Christifideles Laici #32)

However, it is not a role to be realized only in the organizations and associations of the parish.

Paul VI reminds us in Evangeli Nuntiandi (#70) "Their primary and immediate task is not to establish and develop the ecclesial community–this is the specific role of the pastors–but to put to use every Christian and evangelical possibility latent but already present and active in the affairs of the world. Their own field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media."
The world is searching for happiness. It is our responsibility to bring it to them, a happiness that only Christ can give. The Layperson is called to live Christianity in the world. To live as a Christian signifies to live in Grace in a conscious manner. His witness should be vital and direct: committing his whole being with the message he is proclaiming.

C. Pope Paul VI, when he addressed the Cursillistas meeting in Rome, sketched a four-part program that is valid for all of the laity:

First, the permanent task of the layperson will ever be the insertion of the Gospel in life, by means of a personal encounter and friendship with God, and in communion with our brothers and sisters. In addition, Pope John Paul II, in his apostolic exhortation, Christifideles Laici, states: In the context of Church mission, then, "the Lord entrusts a great part of the responsibility to the lay faithful, in communion with all other members of the People of God."

Second, the layperson, in making himself/herself over into a Christian, reforms his/her attitudes. Being converted, he/she believes the Good News and makes it come alive.

Third, the layperson transforms the temporal order in which he/she is immersed by taking his/her own responsibility seriously, and

Fourth, the layperson realizes his/her human and Christian ideal in the world and in the Church by conforming his/her life to the image of Christ and by bringing this life to his/her temporal commitments at all levels: personal, family, professional, civic, socio-economic, political, and so on.

Simply stated, Pope Paul VI reminded us that we, as laity, have a very important role in the mission of the Church. The laity makes up the largest percentage of the people of God. We are obliged to accept our task to be the messengers of the Gospel, and to bring that message into the world as individuals and together with our brothers and sisters in Christ. We become not only bearers of the Gospel, but people who actually live its message. We must take this responsibility very seriously. We bring the message of Christ to every aspect of our lives—without exception. It is a message to be lived everywhere and with everyone. We need only remember that I am the Church, you are the Church, and together we are the Church, the people of God.

We should become not only bearers of the Gospel, but persons that truly live its message. When a Christian does not speak of Christ and of His message, it is a sure sign that the person is not convinced of the importance of Christianity. It is not a matter of always speaking about Christ, but rather being filled with his Grace in a way that it flows through our pores.

6. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAYPERSON’S MISSION

The laity, as we have seen, has a specific mission within the mission of the Church. This mission of the laity also has certain characteristics that help us to better understand this mission. These characteristics are human, supernatural, ecclesial, and apostolic.

Let’s examine each one individually:

A. Human – each of us has a different role to play. Each of us has different gifts and talents that we have received from God and we must put them at the service of Christ in order to spread the Kingdom of God. The Christian must be fully human in order to attain the miracle of the everyday normal life, doing the same as the rest of the world, but doing it well. Heroes of the moment. It is a matter of being saints today, in this century, whether
at the workplace, at home, in the neighborhood, etc. A person living the Gospel according to the way that it was explained. By Grace, we are sons/daughters of the Father, brothers/sisters of Christ and living temples of the Holy Spirit; projecting Christ's image in every crossroad of our life.

B. Supernatural - it is work of grace–our mission is a gift from God. His help, encouragement, love, and spirit shows us the way. The supernatural is not life after death; but, living life to the full during our lifetime. Our kingdom is not of this world, although it gives fullness and value to the kingdoms of this world. What interests us is saving souls. The only thing that counts is the effectiveness of our lives, especially with the people around us.

C. Ecclesial – this means that it is the work of the whole Church. No one is excluded from this mission. We can't wait for the priest to tell us what to do and when to do it. It is a mission that is performed and accomplished in communion with those who believe as we do, hand to hand with the hierarchy. It is truly the work of God and His people.

D. Apostolic – Apostolate: Mission for the spiritual salvation of those around us. We can't shut ourselves up in the sacristies when the world needs us to live in it. This apostolate of being the bearers of the Good News does not consist of word alone. Above all it consists in being a living witness of one who is living out his/her Christianity with all of its consequences.

It is also in being a living instrument. We are called to put on the mind and heart of Jesus Christ wherever we are.

The mission of the laity, our role in the Church's mission, can be summed up in this short story, Following World War II, two Air Force pilots returned to the site of heavily allied bombing raids. There they found a Church that had been severely damaged. Amongst the rubble they found pieces of a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. They put the pieces together as best as they could. When they had nearly completed the project, they realized that the hands were still missing. They were unable to find them. Rather than leave the statue as it was, they made a plaque that read: "He has no hands but yours." We are truly the hands and feet of Jesus to reach out to the world and be His witnesses. We become the living witnesses through which the world can recognize that Christ is alive today. He is alive through and in us.

7. CONCLUSION

Each person has the capacity to discover and accomplish a bit of the Truth and Goodness in the world, if he doesn't discover it, he doesn't accomplish anything. Each one of us, in our lives, depending on our personality and our circumstances must give the world a bit of the truth and goodness since we are laypersons.

This is what it means to be a Christian, a layperson, living in the world today. It gives us an opportunity to make our life a living translation of the Gospel by what we do, nothing more than that. We bring Christ with us wherever we go and in whatever we do in our normal everyday lives. We live in Grace to transform the world to Christ.

We are talking about being saints today, people who, captivated by the Spirit, move out into their everyday environments courageously. We are people who are capable of taking
the marvelous realities of Grace seriously. We are people who can live fully as God's children, as brothers and sisters of Christ, and as temples of the Holy Spirit.

Then, we will be people who realize the beautiful definition of a Christian as stated by Pope John XXIII: "The Christian is a joy—a joy to himself; to God and a joy for other people." We can be "messengers of joy" in the world!