

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KERYGMA

Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you. (1 Cor 15: 1-2)

WHAT IS THE KERYGMA?

The name *kerygma* (a “publicly announced message,” also called “initial proclamation”) refers to those aspects of Divine Revelation that were meant to be explicitly and emphatically proclaimed. It is the heart of the Gospel, the central Gospel message that is to be proclaimed to a fallen humanity. The kerygma is the bedrock of Christian truths, the essential content of the Christian glad tidings. The kerygma brings the inner nature and worth of Christianity into clear focus.

The kerygma is the incomparable good news of the eternal love of God, who, through His only-begotten Son, has called us to Himself and enables us to reach our true home. In brief, it is the Good News of our salvation in Christ: the Divine Father reveals Himself to us in His Son; He has, in the exact sense of the word, *visited* us, given Himself to us, and taken us home to Himself, not only each of us individually but all of us together in the wonderful unity which we form through our living connection with Christ in His Mystical Body.

(Adapted from *The Good News and Its Proclamation* by Johannes Hofinger, S.J. and Francis J. Buckley, S.J.)

Some New Testament Expressions of the Kerygma:

- ❑ **John 3:16** “Yes, God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him may not die but may have eternal life.”
- ❑ **Ephesians 1: 7-8** “It is in Christ and through his blood that we have been redeemed and our sins forgiven, so immeasurably generous is God’s favor to us.”
- ❑ **1 John 4:9-10** “God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.”
- ❑ **Titus 3:3-7** “For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, despicable, hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
- ❑ **Galatians 4:4-5** “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.”

THE FOUR CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE *KERYGMA*

(1) The Reality of the Love of God and His Saving Plan

- ❖ *“For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8: 38-39)*
- ❖ *“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope” (Jer. 29:11).*
- ❖ *“I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).*

GDC 102: “God is not a distant, inaccessible Being, a remote power without a name, but a Father, who is present among his creatures and whose power is his love... Jesus manifests that the history of humanity is not journeying towards nothingness, but, with its aspects of both grace and sin, is in him taken up by God and transformed.”

(2) The Destructiveness of Sin and its Alienating Ramifications

- ❖ *“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).*

GDC 102: “Jesus, in announcing the Kingdom, proclaims the justice of God: he proclaims God’s judgment and our responsibility... The call to conversion and belief in the Gospel of the kingdom – a kingdom of justice, love and peace, and in whose light we shall be judged – is fundamental for catechesis.”

(3) The Incarnation of God’s Son and the Paschal Mystery: The Only Remedy for Humanity’s “Sin Problem”

- ❖ *“God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him may not die but may have eternal life” (John 3:16)*
- ❖ *“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (John 14:6).*

GDC 102: “Jesus declares that the Kingdom of God is inaugurated in him, in his very person.”

(4) The Great Gift of Redemption and Salvation, Offered Through Communion in the Mystical Body of Christ

- ❖ *“Here I stand, knocking at the door. If anyone hears me calling and opens the door, I will enter his house...” (Rev. 3:20).*
- ❖ *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).*
- ❖ *God’s very being is love. By sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his **innermost secret**: God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange. (CCC 221)*

GDC 102: “Jesus shows, equally, that the community of his disciples, the Church, ‘is, on earth, the seed and the beginning of that kingdom’ [LG 5] and, like leaven in the dough, what she desires is that the kingdom of God grow in the world like a great tree, giving shelter to all peoples and cultures.”