

+AGGIE CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS TEAM+

*Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence...
- 1 Peter 3:15*

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Evangelization & Apologetics

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"Therefore let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked Peter and the other apostles, "What are we to do, my brothers?" Peter [said] to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit." – Acts 2:36-38

Knowing Our Audience: The Difference between Apologetics & Evangelization

We must first be a witness to Truth where the Other is, outside any desired situation or "win" of argument.

We must first acknowledge apologetic knowledge is secondary to prayer and sincerely living out the Faith. Secondly, we must acknowledge that the role of Apologist is not to convince or convert any non-Catholic. It is to be a witness to Truth; the Holy Spirit's role is to make the conversions. How can we find Truth in our midst to speak and witness to people throughout our day?

Apologetics by Being an Effective Witness to the Faith

Our actions have meaning and speak to the truths of our faith – frequently, in a more tangible way than our words can.

There is a danger, however. If we do not follow the truths we proclaim in our own actions, it can cause scandal and drive people away from Jesus and the Church.

Mary's Example: Always point to Jesus

Mary shows us that we as humans are not the answer – Jesus is. "Do whatever He tells you"

She is the first Christian and always desires everyone to know her Son – no one is excluded from this invitation.

Jesus' Example: "Then Neither Do I Condemn You"

Apologetics is not a time to judge or berate anyone about what they do or believe but to guide them to the truth with "gentleness and reverence."

Be Logical, Be Consistent (St. Thomas Aquinas' example)

Faith and reason are naturally linked. "Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth" (Fides et Ratio)

We are called to be prepared to explain our faith with charity, and to practice what we preach.

Know Your Faith, Know Your Scripture

Scripture provides the basis of our faith and so we must show the basis of underpinnings of the faith but it does not pre-exist the Faith. We must proclaim the Gospel as it is, an apostolic Tradition, and be charitable to others as we grow in sharing the truth and the history of the Bible.

References:

New American Bible. <http://usccb.org/bible/>