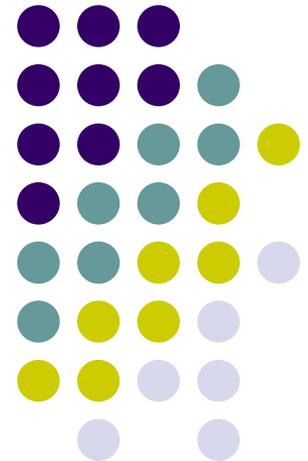
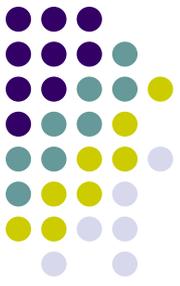


Stewards of the Catholic Ministry

Fr Kevin McGovern,
Caroline Chisholm Centre for Health Ethics:
Mercy Health Board Strategic Session,
5 May 2015





Overview

Based on Pope Francis's *Evangelii Gaudium*

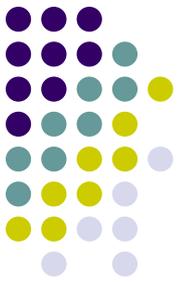
- What is Evangelisation?
 - The Five-Act Christian Story
- Service and Silence

Discernment in a Rapidly Changing World

- Top Down Approach
- Bottom Up Approach
- The Courage to Speak Our Truth

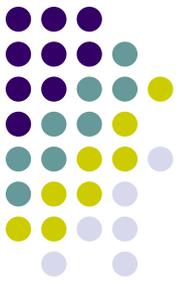
Questions and Discussion

Pope Francis's *Evangelii Gaudium*



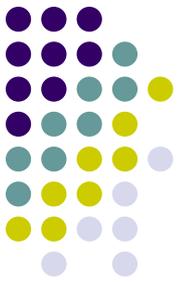
- Apostolic Exhortation
 - 50,000 words
 - issued on 24 November 2013
- “I want to encourage... a new chapter of evangelisation.” (*EG*, #1)
 - Many of us are familiar with the Evangelical model of evangelisation.
 - *Evangelii Gaudium* will teach us the Catholic model of evangelisation.

The Five-Act Christian Story



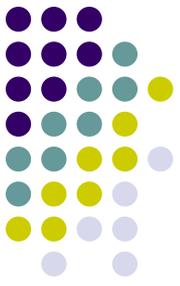
- Creation
- Fall
- Incarnation
- Redemption
- Resurrection Destiny

Creation and Fall



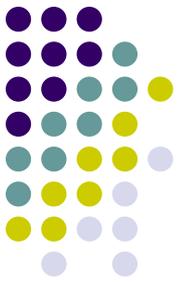
- Creation: Everything is created by God. Everything is good!
 - God is still at work in the world!
- Fall: Creation is damaged and no longer exactly as the Creator had intended.
 - At least one cause of the damage is human sin.
 - The only Christian doctrine for which there is empirical evidence is sin. (G. K. Chesterton and Reinhold Niebuhr)
- Creation and Fall are not a literal historical record.
- Instead, their purpose is ontological – that is, they teach us about the nature of reality.

Human Beings Before the Fall



- **In ourselves**
 - still death – but perhaps less fear of death
 - physically, more resistant to disease
 - emotionally, more resilient
- **In our relationships to other people**
 - more aware of importance of relationships
 - greater solidarity with all people of every tribe and nation
- **In our relationship with God**
 - greater sense of God
 - more aware of the importance of our relationship with God
- **In our relationship with all of creation**
 - more wonder and gratitude for the bounty and beauty of Creation
 - greater sense of responsibility to care for Creation

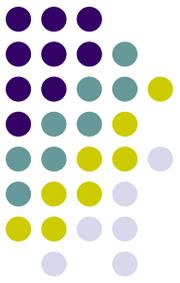
Incarnation and Redemption



Christian beliefs about sin make some sense to those who do not have the Christian faith.
Christian beliefs about Jesus Christ make sense only to those who share the Christian faith.

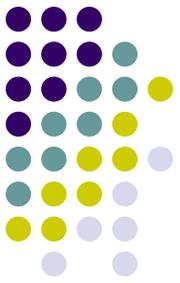
- **Jesus Christ is the Word of God Made Flesh**
 - sent to restore what was lost through the Fall
 - Jesus does this in two ways:
 - 1) Jesus does this through his active ministry, proclaiming that the Kingdom or Reign of God is re-establishing itself in this sin-damaged world:
 - In the Kingdom, sick people will be healed.
 - In the Kingdom, people will live in solidarity like sisters and brothers.
 - In the Kingdom, all people will know God.
 - In the Kingdom, we will care for Creation.

Incarnation and Redemption



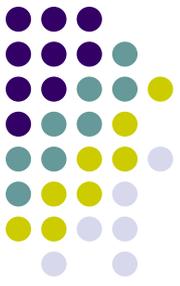
- 2) Jesus does this through his Passion, Death and Resurrection:
- The arrest, torture and execution of Jesus seemed like a disaster.
 - But something mysterious happened. What was lost was restored above all through the death of Jesus.
 - In this, the Word of God Made Flesh was totally obedient to the will of God the Father. This changed everything!
 - Through the Incarnation, the Word of God was radically connected to all humankind and all of creation, so these changes affected all reality.
 - An analogy: The death of Jesus is like the Japanese surrender on 15 August 1945.
 - At this time, the war is over and for the Allies the war is won.
 - But there is still a lot to do!

Resurrection Destiny



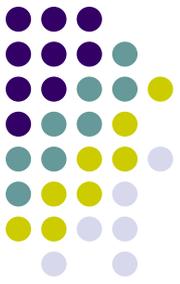
- The Divine Mission of restoring what was lost through the Fall continues.
 - Because this is God’s work, contemporary missiologists call this *Missio Dei* (Latin for the Mission of God).
 - The Church exists to contribute to the *Missio Dei*:
 - in the way we live in the Church, as a **sign** of the Kingdom
 - in what we do, as an **instrument** of the Kingdom
 - Stephen Bevans SVD: It’s not that the Church has a Mission. Rather, it’s the Mission that has a Church!
 - Darrell Gruder: this *Missio Dei* is “more radical, more inclusive, [and] more transforming” than we can even imagine!

So: What is Evangelisation?



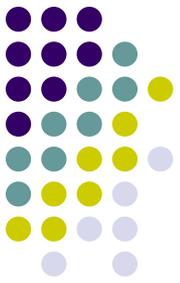
- According to Francis, in the Catholic vision, evangelisation is **everything** we do to contribute to the *Missio Dei* – **everything** we do which builds up the Kingdom of God:
 - caring for people's material needs (*EG*, #178 & 181)
 - asking hard questions about the structural causes of poverty (*EG*, #188)
 - caring for people's spiritual needs (*EG*, #200)
 - caring for the environment (*EG*, #216)

Perceptive Commentators:



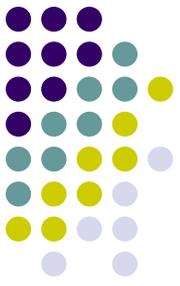
- Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich: “What impresses me above all is how strongly the Pope combines the social dimension of the Option for the Poor with the mandate to evangelise.”
- Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne: “Too often evangelisation and working for social justice are presented as separate, or even opposing, missions.” The Archdiocese of Melbourne has “offices for evangelisation, for youth, for life, marriage and family, for justice and peace, for social services, for migrants and refugees, for ecumenical and interfaith relations, for Aboriginal ministry, AIDS ministry, prison and hospital ministry, local and international charity, and many educational agencies.” **All** these agencies are involved in “the evangelising mission of the Church.”

Perceptive Commentators:



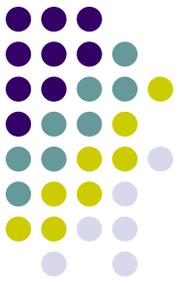
- Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane: “At the heart of all this talk about evangelisation and new evangelisation is a very simple question: how can we, you and I, in practical ways reach out particularly to those who are on the margin, who are wounded, who are broken, who are poor.”
- Frank Brennan SJ: “Get out there. Do something to help your neighbour. Do it joyfully. Do it with passion.”

Implications for Catholic Health and Aged Care



- Pope Francis has one more surprise. Even though there is much to do, he directs us first to a “renewed personal encounter” with God. (*EG*, #3)
- “Thanks solely to this encounter... we are liberated from our narrowness and self-absorption.... Here we find the source and inspiration for all our efforts at evangelisation. For if we have received the love which restores meaning to our lives, how can we fail to share that love with others?” (*EG*, #8)
- Pope Francis therefore directs us to two different experiences: to **service** and to **silence**.

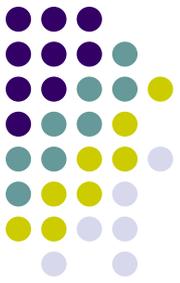
Service and Silence



Service:

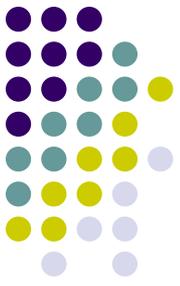
- Don't forget that our service to the relatively advantaged is also a contribution to the *Missio Dei*.
- The Preferential Option for the Poor gives a certain priority to services for the most disadvantaged. How can we develop these services?
- Reducing waste and caring for the environment is also related to the *Missio Dei*.
- What can we do to respond better to the spiritual needs of those who receive our services, and those who provide them? For me, this is a key challenge.

Service and Silence



Silence:

- Silence can mean different things to different people. For some, it is simply silence. For others, it is listening to God and responding in prayer. But whoever we are, we need silence!
- A key concern for our organisations must be our employees' work-life balance.
- A key challenge for each of us is structuring our lives so we have time and space for silence. It takes discipline!
- It is important that we are disciplined in our use of social media.
- Service calls us into silence to reflect on what we have experienced. Silence in turn calls us into wiser and more generous service.
- In my opinion, inviting us into this dynamic of service and silence is the key message of *Evangelii Gaudium*.



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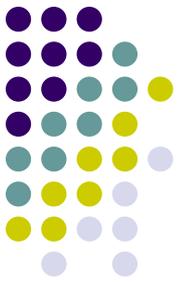
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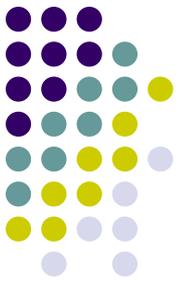
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The Top Down Approach



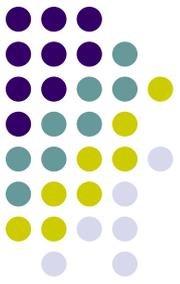
- The focus is predominately/entirely on official Church teaching.
- This approach has its place.
- It also has its limitations:
 - Its practitioners sometimes forget Catholic orthodoxy also requires us to have the heart of Christ who welcomes sinners.
 - There can be development of doctrine.

The Bottom Up Approach



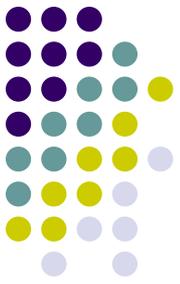
- The focus is predominately on pastoral reality and experience.
- This approach too has its place.
- It also has its limitations:
 - Its practitioners are sometimes too ready to dismiss problems which are of real concern.
 - Rather than just accepting where people are at, we sometimes have to call them to a higher standard.

The Courage to Speak Our Truth



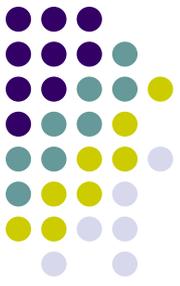
- Discernment in the Church works best when we engage both the Top Down Approach *and* the Bottom Up Approach.
- This requires that we have the courage to speak our truth.
- Even if ultimately we are found to be mistaken, this can be a real service to the Church in its quest for truth.

Encouragement to Speak Our Truth (#1)



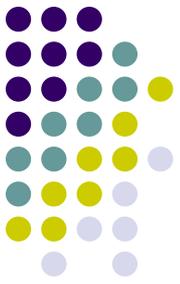
- Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)*, #33:
 - “The Church is guardian of the deposit of God’s word and draws religious and moral principles from it, but it does not have a ready answer to every question.”
 - “Still, it is eager to associate the light of revelation with the experience of humanity in trying to clarify the course upon which it has recently entered.”

Encouragement to Speak Our Truth (#2)



- Paul VI, *Octogesima Adveniens (A Call to Action)*, #4:
 - “In the face of such widely varying situations it is difficult for us to utter a unified message and to put forward a solution which has universal validity. Such is not our ambition, nor is it our mission. It is up to the Christian communities to analyse with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel’s unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgement and directives for action from the social teaching of the Church.”

Encouragement to Speak Our Truth (#3)



- Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)*, #184:
 - “Neither the Pope nor the Church have a monopoly on the interpretation of social realities or the proposal of solutions to contemporary problems. Here I can repeat the insightful observation of Pope Paul VI: ‘In the face of such widely varying situations, it is difficult for us to utter a unified message and to put forward a solution which has universal validity. This is not our ambition, nor is it our mission. It is up to the Christian communities to analyse with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country.’”