

“The New Evangelization and the Power of Personal Testimony”

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“Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.” A reality of which [Pope Paul VI \(1\)](#) was keenly aware almost forty years ago, continues to be ours today. From sport figures, to “American idols”, to “corporate tycoons”, to “weight loss programs success stories”, the message is always: “If I did it, you can do it”. As a society we seem to be increasingly averse to speeches and compulsively compelled by real images, living examples, and role models when it comes to how to live our lives, the choices we make or whose example we perceive as worth following. Thanks to the always-on-your-face media, the Internet, Facebook and the whole digital explosion, there is no way to hide! We know it all, the good and the bad. It is an exciting time to be a Christian! If “to bear witness” is the “trademark” of living according to the Gospel, guess what? Time to get our act together! We are being watched 24/7!

This is precisely how the concept of the *New Evangelization* comes alive here at the Catholic Charismatic Center. Responding to the exhortations in the documents of [Paul VI](#), (2) [John Paul II \(3\)](#) and [Benedict XVI \(4\)](#) on the Church’s visions of a *New Evangelization*, the Center opens its doors to those who are living their faith in “cooled down mode” and want to open their hearts to being “fired up” in the Holy Spirit; to those who do not profess their faith and “wonder” what else is there beyond baptism, and to those anywhere in between! An *Evangelization Team* made up of as diverse a group as they get, with great zeal, love and passion for what they do, puts together several evangelization retreats throughout the year: “*Faith into Fire of the Holy Spirit*”, “*Isaiah*”, “*Paul*”, “*Community*” and “*New Life in the Spirit*”. These retreats are true “reality shows” where those who have been in the trenches tell their stories. What makes these retreats “life changing” it is precisely the “bearing witness” of real and personal encounters with the *Risen Christ*. They provide an encounter with the *Word of God* in a “real world”, an experience of “being” community, and healthy helpings of Catholic doctrine. Want to follow someone real? “Come, and you will see” (John 1: 39)

Web links to add:

(1) Georges Cottier: Counter-Witness and Scandal

http://www.vatican.va/jubilee_2000/magazine/documents/ju_mag_june-sept-1996_cottier_en.html

(2) Paul VI

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi_en.html

(3) John Paul II

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte_en.html

(4) Benedict XVI

http://www.ewtn.com/new_evangelization/Ratzinger.htm