

Exploring Mission Motivation

Why mission? Why evangelize? These questions often come to the mind of any serious Christian, especially as we conclude the Church's "mission month" of October. A creative expression of renewed mission motivation is found in the 1990 FABC V document of the Asian bishops; they present five "core motives" for mission engagement.

1. "We evangelize, first of all from a deep sense of gratitude to God, the Father 'who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing' (Eph 1:3).... Mission is above all else an overflow of this life from grateful hearts transformed by the grace of God.... Without a personal experience of this love received as gift and mercy, no sense of mission can flourish."

2. Christians need to be aware that "mission is also a mandate. We evangelize because we are sent into the whole world to make disciples of all nations. The one who sends us is Jesus.... We cannot fulfill this mission apart from him (Jn 15:4-5)." 3. We evangelize also because "we believe in the Lord Jesus. We have received the gift of faith. We have become Christians."

4. "We evangelize also because we have been incorporated by baptism into the Church, which is missionary by its very nature.... The Church exists in order to evangelize.... Each member ... has received the right and duty to the apostolate from the Lord himself." 5. "And, finally, we evangelize because the Gospel is leaven for liberation and for the transformation of society. Our Asian world needs the values of the Kingdom and of Christ in order to bring about the human development, justice, peace and harmony with God, among peoples and with all creation that the peoples of Asia long for."

October, the "Month of Mission," is a fine time for a little soul-searching: How deep is *my personal motivation* and desire to share my faith with others?