

2023 Diocesan Day for Catechists



The God who speaks today

Intentional Accompaniment in Baptism Sacramental Preparation

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What is Intentional Accompaniment?

- Intentionally walking alongside others on their journey towards conversion
- While seeking the Lord's direction through prophetic listening
- And remaining alongside them after conversion as they begin the lifelong journey of missionary discipleship

Intentional Accompaniment: An apprenticeship for a new generation of builders, Michael Hall



Evangelii Gaudium

In our world, ordained ministers and other pastoral workers can make present the fragrance of Christ's closeness and his personal gaze. The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious and laity – into this “**art of accompaniment**” which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (cf. Exodus 3:5). The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life (169).

Pastoral accompaniment in processes of growth: EG 169–173



Christus Vivit

“Many [have] pointed to the shortage of qualified people **devoted to accompaniment**. Belief in the theological and pastoral value of listening entails rethinking and renewing the ways that priestly ministry is ordinarily exercised, and reviewing its priorities. The Synod also recognized the need to train consecrated persons and laypeople, male and female, to accompany young people (244).

Accompaniment by adults: CV 242–247

If you are to accompany others on this path, you must be the first to follow it, day in and day out (298).

Listening and Accompaniment: CV 291–298



What is intentional about our accompaniment?

- As part of *Some Definite Service*, the diocesan-wide approach to parish growth supported through local people, plans and prayer, we are experiencing and offering accompaniment as the norm.
- To do this effectively, we require:
 - Knowledge of the other
 - Knowledge of the desired outcome for the other
 - Skill in listening to the other AND the voice of the Lord
 - Time (cf. EG 222–223) & a willingness to put aside personal preferences
- Essentially, we require: **Direction, Docility and Detachment**



The 3 Ds

Direction

- What is the current situation?
- What is the destination?
- What might be the steps to take us there?

Docility

- How is the Lord speaking to us (in prayer before, during the conversation and in reflection on the interaction)?

Detachment

- How might I leave aside my preferences and preconceptions?



The hourglass: Intentional Accompaniment Model

The first task is to ascertain conversion to Jesus Christ and if not present, that is your direction.

Thereafter, helping the other to deepen their faith (**holiness**) and appreciate their role in spreading the faith (**mission**).

Whatever the ministry of the apostolate, this sense of direction is so helpful.



A Parish in view; understanding where we come from.

1-4 weeks of Baptism.

Preparation in between Sunday Masses / Saturday Morning.

Assumption of the faith of parents/carers.

Focus on the Liturgical Rites.

Short prayer.

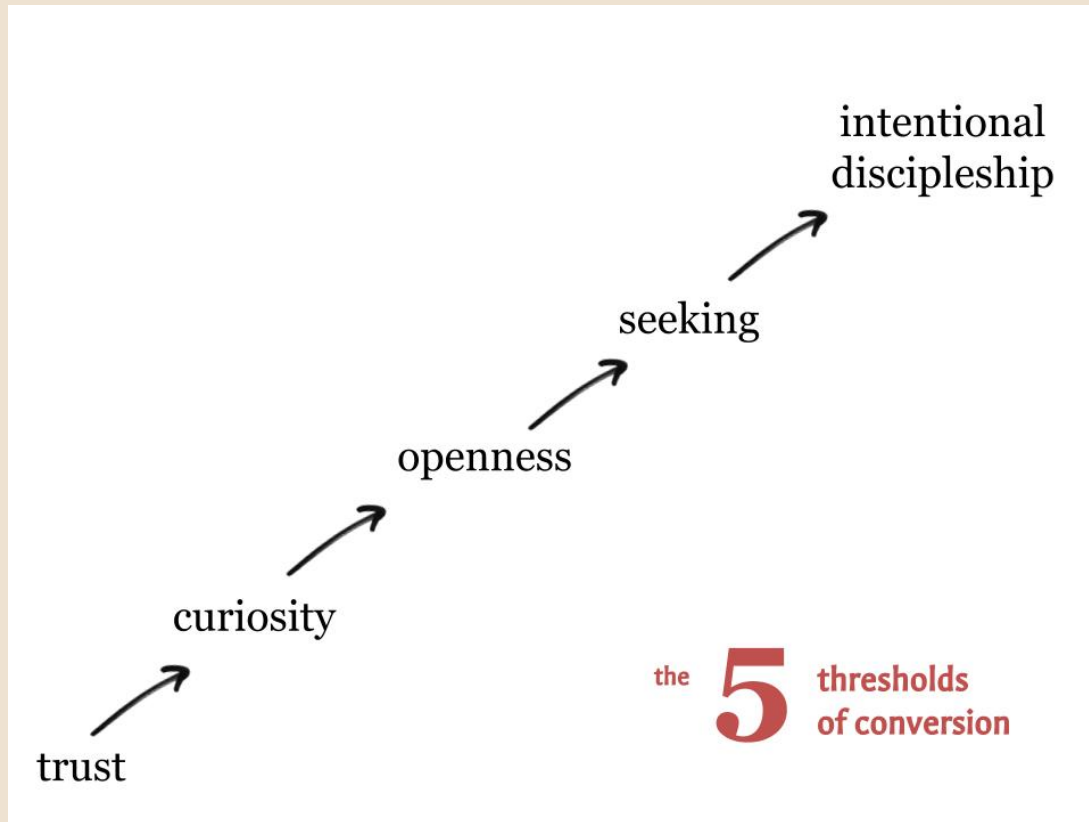
Inevitability of None Practice.

Exclusive focus on the parent's/carers desire for their children.

Afraid to seem to be demanding.



Intentional Accompaniment: A different way.



“We always need someone else. Trust, thus, cannot exist without the other. Only if we are willing to get to know them, to discuss with them, to see in them the face of Christ, to share their joys and sufferings, can we trust them. Encounter, thus, is the basis of trust.”

Pope Francis



Christ First.

Accompaniment is not simply a matter of remaining near to others, but above all of helping to point them towards **Jesus in the context of an authentic human relationship.**

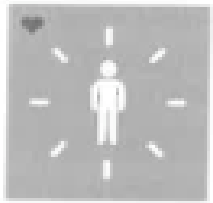
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Rather than speak first about the programme, seek to ignite interest in the person, life, and character of Jesus.

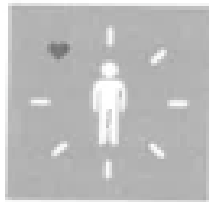


Shifting the Focus from Child to Parent.

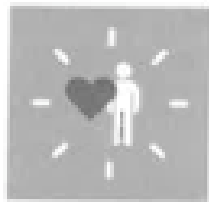
The shift in Baptismal Preparation from the child to the parent enables us to focus on helping the parents to become open to the possibility of a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ for themselves. Without this, Baptism becomes a **Sacramentalising moment**, and not an evangelising one. Without a personal relationship with the Lord, they cannot be the **"first educators in the faith"**



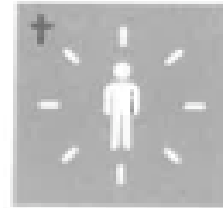
OUTSIDE OF MY LIFE



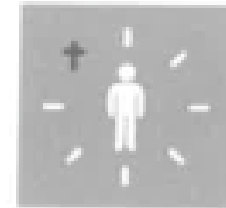
PART OF MY LIFE



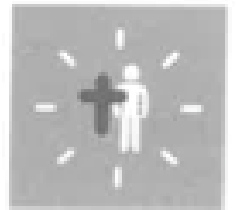
CENTRE OF MY LIFE



OUTSIDE OF MY LIFE



PART OF MY LIFE



CENTRE OF MY LIFE



People need people; connection is transforming

Each family who attends Baptism Preparation is linked with another family in the parish who is living an intentional Christian life. This is an informal way of connecting people to those who can share something of their life and journey to the Lord. The person on the threshold of conversion begins to know the Church. On the Sunday before the Baptism, the family is welcomed to meet the Community at the Sunday Mass.

Community will be of vital support to those we accompany. Our communities must be welcoming to those who are discovering or rediscovering faith. Our context needs to be a place where seekers and new disciples alike can know they are part of something greater– The Body of Christ.

MODERN MAN LISTENS MORE WILLINGLY
TO WITNESSES THAN TO TEACHERS, AND IF
HE DOES LISTEN TO TEACHERS, IT IS
BECAUSE THEY ARE WITNESSES,

- POPE PAUL VI -

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People need people; connection is transforming

Some Principals for those who accompany others.

Be a friend

Make and keep promises

Listen non-judgementally

Genuine curiosity

Able to match curiosity.

Integrity of Life.

Openness



Igniting desire: learning to pray.

Four stages of prayer.

Cultivating Silence

Simple vocal formal prayers.

Simple Intercessory prayers

Praying with others.

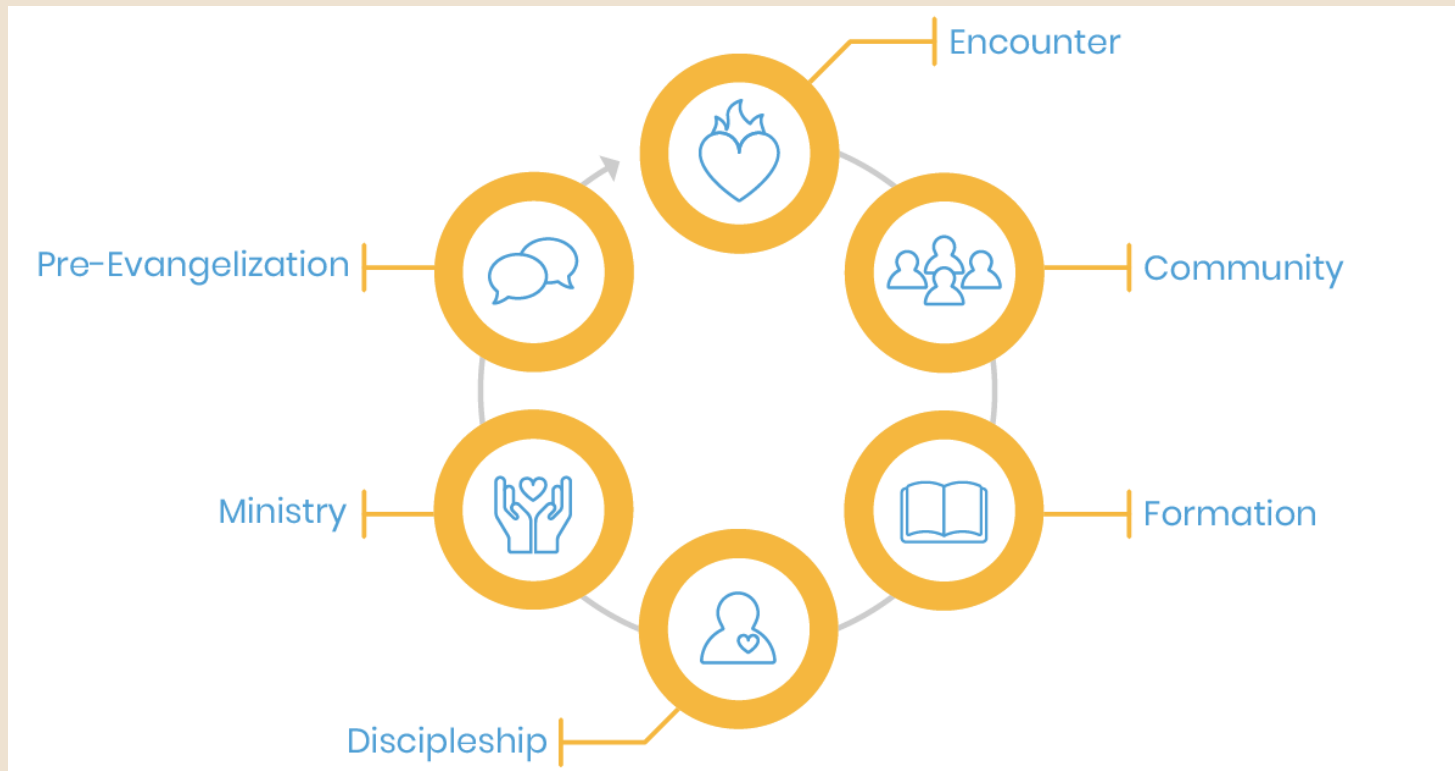
**I do, you observe.
We do together.
You do, I observe**

Luke 11:1-4 Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As he finished, one of his disciples came to him and said, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." Jesus said, "This is how you should pray: "Father, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon.



Follow the sheep.

N E X T ?



A Parish in view; understanding where we might move to.

Session 1 – Who is Jesus Christ.

Session 2 – Who am I?

Session 3 – What's on offer?

Session 4 – Meet the Church

Session 5 – Understanding Baptism.

