

THE ART OF ACCOMPANIMENT

Kristin Bird, Executive Director, Burning Hearts Disciples



“IT IS NOT GOOD THAT THE
MAN SHOULD BE ALONE.”

God calls us to community
and companionship. We are
not called to journey
through life alone.

Genesis 2:18

In our world, ordained ministers and
other pastoral workers can make
present the

*fragrance of Christ's closeness
and his personal gaze*

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.



"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."

Evangelii Gaudium, 169

Evangelii Gaudium, 169



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WHAT IS ACCOMPANIMENT?

- Honoring the 'other' as a sacred mystery and wonder
- Fascination with the way God is working in the life of another
- Genuine, authentic relationships
- Openness of heart



Liz Lemon Swindle, "Without Purse or Scrip"

KEEP YOUR EYES ON CHRIST

- Directed toward evangelization
- Recognizes that the journey's purpose is to reach the destination
- Starts now & is fulfilled in eternity

Genuine spiritual ***accompaniment*** always begins and flourishes in the context of service to the mission of ***evangelization***.

Evangelii Gaudium, 173

Evangelii Gaudium, 173

FOCUSED ON ACTION



Not to put the word into practice, not to make it reality, is to build on sand, to remain in the realm of pure ideas and to end up in a lifeless and unfruitful self-centeredness.

Evangelii Gaudium, 233



It is very important for us to associate with others who are walking in the right way—not only those who are where we are in the journey, but also those who have gone farther. Those who have drawn close to God have the ability to bring us closer to him, for in a sense they take us with them.

Saint Teresa of Ávila (The Interior Castle)

IT STARTS WITH YOU

KNOW YOUR STORY

“It is impossible to persevere in a fervent evangelization unless we are convinced from personal experience that it is not the same thing to have known Jesus as not to have known him, not the same thing to walk with him as to walk blindly, not the same thing to hear his word as not to know it, and not the same thing to contemplate him, to worship him, to find our peace in him, as not to.”

Evangelii Gaudium, 266

PRACTICING THE ART OF ACCOMPANIMENT

- Step 1: Draw Near to Them
- Step 2: Listen as a Disciple
- Step 3: Share The Story
- Step 4: Invite Them to Recognize Christ
- Step 5: Entrust Them to the Holy Spirit

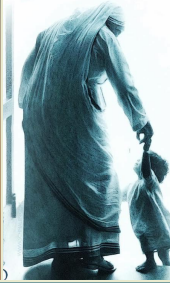
Luke 24:13-35

STEP 1: DRAW NEAR TO THEM

*“And it happened that
while they were
conversing and debating,
Jesus himself drew near
and walked with them.”*

Luke 24:15

Bring love into your home.



“IT IS EASY TO LOVE
THE PEOPLE FAR AWAY.
IT IS NOT ALWAYS EASY
TO LOVE THOSE CLOSE TO US.
IT IS EASIER TO GIVE A CUP OF RICE
TO RELIEVE HUNGER
THAN TO RELIEVE
THE LONELINESS AND PAIN
OF SOMEONE UNLOVED
IN OUR OWN HOME.
BRING LOVE INTO YOUR HOME
FOR THIS IS WHERE OUR LOVE
FOR EACH OTHER MUST START.”

— Mother Teresa

STEP 2: LISTEN AS A DISCIPLE

“Listening...is an openness
of heart which makes
possible that closeness
without which genuine
spiritual encounter cannot
occur.”



Evangelii Gaudium, 171

LISTEN FOR BROKENNESS

- “Name the restlessness in your heart.” Encourage them to bring that restlessness to Jesus.
- If you could ask God one question you knew he would ask today, what would you ask?
- Use Healing Prayer when appropriate





STEP 3: SHARE THE STORY

The silencing effect thus reinforces itself: if a 40% minority does only 20% of the talking, they perceive themselves to be even more outnumbered than they truly are and are thus even less inclined to speak. Hence, the spiral into silence.

Sherry Weddell, *Forming Intentional Disciples*

PROCLAIM THE KERYGMA

- They have a right to hear it!
- Respect where they are - be sensitive tempo & pace.
- Tell THE STORY more than once and in more than one way.
- Make no assumptions about what they already know.



"Fidelity both to a message whose servants we are and to the people to whom we must transmit it living and intact is the central axis of evangelization."

Evangelii Nuntiandi, 4



TELL YOUR STORY

"This message has to be shared humbly as a testimony on the part of one who is always willing to learn, in the awareness that the message is so rich and so deep that it always exceeds our grasp..."

Evangelii Gaudium, 128

STEP 4: INVITE THEM TO RECOGNIZE CHRIST

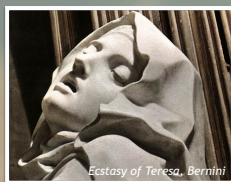
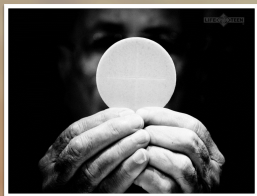
"Although it sounds obvious, spiritual accompaniment must lead others ever closer to God, in whom we attain true freedom... To accompany them would be counterproductive if it became a sort of therapy supporting their self-absorption and ceased to be a pilgrimage with Christ to the Father."



Evangelii Gaudium, 169

Supper at Emmaus, Caravaggio

"In our world, ordained ministers and other pastoral workers can make present the fragrance of Christ's closeness and his personal gaze."



Ecstasy of Teresa, Bernini

"The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ."

Evangelii Gaudium, 169

Catechesi Tradendae, 5

use
Your
Words



WOULD YOU LIKE TO INVITE
JESUS TO BE AT THE CENTER
OF YOUR LIFE?

"Someone good at such accompaniment does not give in to frustrations or fears. He or she invites others to let themselves be healed, to take up their mat, embrace the cross, leave all behind and go forth ever anew to proclaim the Gospel."

Evangelii Gaudium, 172

STEP 5: FRUITFUL DISCIPLESHIP

“So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them...”

Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.”



Luke 24:33-35

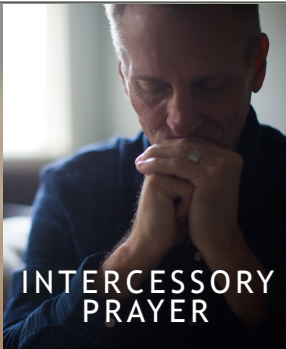
Your Company

We have come to accept religious “activity” or “identity” without personal faith and intentional discipleship as normal. Acceptance of relative fruitlessness as “normal” has profoundly shaped the lives of all the baptized, our parochial culture, our pastoral practice, and our mission to the world.

Sherry Weddell, Forming Intentional Disciples

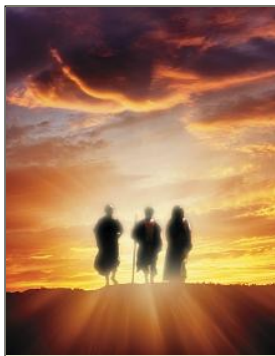
Intercession is like a “leaven” in the heart of the Trinity. It is a way of penetrating the Father’s heart and discovering new dimensions which can shed light on concrete situations and change them.

What our intercession achieves is that his power, his love and his faithfulness are shown ever more clearly in the midst of the people.



INTERCESSORY
PRAYER

Evangelii Gaudium, 283



“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.”

Evangelii Gaudium, 169

HEALING AND ACCOMPANIMENT

Why does Jesus retain the scars of the crucifixion?

“that he may convince those redeemed in His blood, how mercifully they have been helped, as he exposes before them the traces of the same death.”



Summa Theologiae III (q. 54)

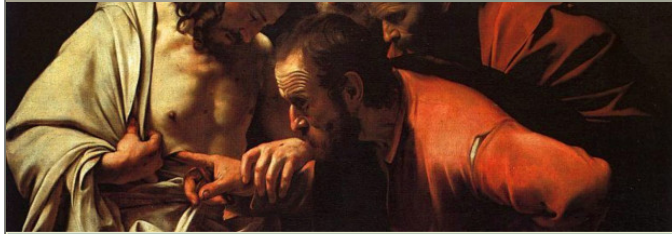


BRING HEALING

“Christ’s compassion toward the sick and his many healings of every kind of infirmity are a resplendent sign that ‘God has visited his people’ and that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. Jesus has the power not only to heal, but also to forgive sins; he has come to heal the whole man, soul and body; he is the physician the sick have need of.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1503

OPENNESS OF HEART



"An openness of heart which makes possible that closeness without which genuine spiritual encounter cannot occur."

Evangelii Gaudium, 191



*"Like a mother feeding and looking after her own children, we felt so devoted and protective towards you, and had come to love you so much, that we were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but **our whole lives as well**."*

1 Thessalonians 2: 7-8