



*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit, ...” (Mathew 28:19-20).*

November 2015: Reflection - Mathew 28:19-20

Our reflections in the month of October invited us to experience the love and communion within the Blessed Trinity in our own personal life. As and when this experience of love and communion matures within us, we would experience an urge within us to move out in sharing this experience. This could be called the horizontal dimension of evangelization – sharing of the love and communion. I am thinking of the cell group that I became part of a decade ago. Within a year or two we grew in our love and care for one another.

The intensity of the communion among us was so great that we could experience the living presence of the Triune God whenever we came together to pray, share, reflect, etc. This was further manifested often through gifts of the Holy Spirit and certain healings. As this continued for a while we began to experience an irresistible urge within us to move out to share our experience. In other words, we began to reach out to the needy and the poor. Now, a decade later, that love and communion among us continues to mature and at the same time we reach out to hundreds of poor and needy in different ways.

The first Christian community in the Acts of the Apostles is a beautiful expression of how the experience of the love and communion of the Blessed Trinity amongst them naturally matured and overflowed into concrete gestures of love and care for those in every kind of need (Acts 2: 42,44-47; 4:32-34). The cry of St. Paul, the 'love of Christ urges me on' (2 Cor. 5:14) and "woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16) were clear expressions of his maturation in his Christian life and identity. The beginnings of monastic communities and religious institutes also would witness to the reality of the experience of an intense life of love and communion among the pioneers which gradually overflowed or matured in the expression of their particular charism - works of mercy, preaching, evangelization, works of charity, etc. In the Jesus Youth Movement also one can trace a similar experience among the pioneers of the movement. We see therefore, how the sharing of faith (evangelizing) has become the hallmark and the defining identity of a genuine Christian community. In other words, faith is only worth having when you give it away. "No believer in Christ," St. John Paul II resolutely told us in *Redemptoris Missio*, his 1990 encyclical announcing a new evangelization, "no institution of the Church, can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples." Thus to evangelize is not just a task undertaken from time to time; or even most of the time. It is, to put it simply, the Church's defining identity; it is what she exists for. That would mean that one could claim to be a Christian only when he/she has shared his/her faith.