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Be Converted Anew— and Go Evangelize

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As Catholics, we represent the Catholic Christian brand to everyone we meet. We've been given tremendous power, and we wield that power at all times. There's no off button. Our influence is always on—even if we don't feel like good Catholics.

Brand is the buzzword of our consumer culture. Dozens of brands are part of our daily lives. We display them on our clothes and the cars we drive. Companies now recognize the benefits of creating a brand, something Catholics have known for more than 2,000 years.

Companies spend years of research and boatloads of money defining their brand. Creating a brand involves developing a mission statement, a concise declaration about what the company believes and how it plans to accomplish its mission. Sound familiar? As Catholics, we recite something similar each time we say the Creed.

If employees and consumers don't buy into a brand, it falls flat. Similarly, the Church wants others to buy into their brand with enthusiasm. We're all spokespersons for the Catholic brand whether we intend to be or not. The following five steps will help us more effectively communicate the Catholic brand.

1. Be converted anew. A *Brand Evangelist* is a customer so in love with a brand that he does unofficial marketing for it. Who hasn't encountered passionate fans of a movie, restaurant, or band? Their enthusiasm is contagious. Emotional marketing is the promise of an unforgettable experience. This is also true in our spiritual lives. People are looking for an unforgettable experience, for conversion.

Whether your conversion happened in a flash or a slow progression, it's time to be converted anew. In the opening of the Joy of the Gospel (*Evangelii Gaudium*), Pope Francis writes: "I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them.... Now is the time to say to Jesus: 'Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming embrace'" (EG 3).



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