

The Guest Speaker Dr. Victoria Yeung received her D.Min. at the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, U.S.A. She spoke on the topic recorded below:-

A. Pope Francis' Papal Exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel"

In 2012, a "Bishops' Conference" was held in Rome on the evangelization in our modern world. When Pope Francis was elected on 13-3-2013, he came out with his Papal Exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel" as a blue print of his ministry.

The Gospel (or Good News) was that God became Man in the person of Jesus and the mission of the church was "to teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit". Thus evangelization is announcing the Good News so that people will (i) accept, (ii) return to God and (iii) receive the Sacrament of baptism. After this, the people of God must listen to and live the Gospel and bear witness to the Good News with Charity. True evangelization is to spread the Gospels to non-believers (outside aspect) and to live in faith (inside aspect) – resulting in evangelization and "re-evangelization".

B. "The Joy of the Gospel" Detailed Structure

The papal exhortation consists of a "Preface and five chapters, totaling 288 articles:-

Preface – Proclaiming new joys of the gospel.

Chapter I – The church needs transformation in order to evangelize the world in our new era.

– Must share joy of encounter and re-encounter with Jesus.

Chapter II – Must say "no" to temptation of wealth and power, both by our laity and especially our clergy. New way of proclamation of Salvation by a resurrected Christ.

Chapter III – (i) Evangelization by every member of the church

(ii) Formation of priests

(iii) Evangelization by priests for believers and non-believers

Chapter IV – Deals with society and the church, i.e. dealing with other faiths. The church is a missionary church to spread salvation through words and living the faith. The Holy Church or the Hierarchic Church must have the Gospels as its centre.

Chapter V – The church must be filled with the Holy Spirit and be re-vitalized. Human nature has its limitations. The Church must become a "Welcoming Mother" to seek out lost souls and must imitate the Holy Virgin Mary, the Mother of the Church. The key point is to encounter and re-encounter with Christ. The last article (Article 288) mentions the "Quality of Mary" i.e. humility that Mary showed when she said "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). Mary is the "New Star of Evangelization". All members just undergo "On-going formation" and become "born-again Christians" (a favourite phrase of our Protestant brethren).

C. Summary

- i. Joy of the Gospels means true Christians must have constant joy with encounter of Christ in life
- ii. "New Vocabulary" to evangelize the modern world
- iii. Mary is the "New Star of Evangelization" – accepts God with humility ("be it done according to thy word")