

# “Evangelicals & Catholics Together” (Handout)

## Original text - Evangelicals & Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium in 1994

“Christians who are afraid to build bridges, and prefer to build walls, are Christians who are not sure of their faith, not sure of Jesus Christ.” - Pope Francis

### History helps us understand

- “First wave”
  - Catholics hold the line & lead the way
  - Opposition made this a “Catholic issue”
  - Leading Evangelicals tepidly, but publicly, embraced abortion
- “Second wave”
  - “Whatever Happened to the Human Race” (Schaeffer & Koop) awakens Evangelicals
- “Third wave”
  - Our great hope – minorities mobilizing as leaders in pro-life/pregnancy help movement

### Challenges

- Centuries in the making
- God is not bound by our doctrine to accomplish His will
- Walk in humility
- Function in grace
- Maintain respect

### Fostering Inclusiveness –

Organizationally
Use broad, inclusive (or vary) terms – Christendom, Christians, believers, Christ-followers, Christ-centered, RSV/NIV. ( <i>Gal. 3:28</i> )
Conversely, steer clear of identifying communities separately – Naming both communities is cumbersome and subtly discordant ( <i>1 Cor. 1:12-14</i> )
Intentionally highlight leaders/local churches from both communities – Quotes in communications, invocation/benediction at fundraising events, etc.
Leadership/staff should endeavor to reflect community – Lack of representation from one community challenges inclusiveness
Policies and procedures that reflect respect for both communities – Statement of Faith, evangelism, church referrals ( <i>client’s Christian tradition</i> )

“What the world needs from the great house of Christianity is not that all the walls be knocked out between the rooms, but that we love each other in all the ways the Bible says, including defending and confirming the truth of Scripture as we see it (Eph. 4:15).” – *John Piper*

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Inclusive - Personally	
For Evangelicals	For Catholics
There is rich & Christian history of biblical scholarship between the New Testament & Martin Luther ( <i>and since</i> )!	There actually are non-Catholic Christians knowledgeable about Christian faith.
“Sharing” the Gospel should include “being the Gospel” – Luke 10	“Being the Gospel” should include speaking the Gospel – Rom. 10:14-15
Positional titles are important and communicate ecclesiastical authority.	Progressive honorific titles can be very confusing and challenging.
Evangelicals aren’t the only ones interested in evangelism.	Catholics are strongly encouraged to evangelize. (JP II “Mission of the Redeemer”)
Carefully crafted written prayers are quite acceptable to God. (Psalms)	Spontaneous prayer suggests a personal & conversational relationship with God.

### The Good News

- We are the Bibles the world is reading; We are the creeds the world is needing; We are the sermons the world is heeding. – *Reverend Billy Graham*
- God is opening before the Church the horizons of a humanity more fully prepared for the sowing of the Gospel... No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples. – *Pope John Paul II, Redemptoris Missio*

### Overcoming obstacles

- Understand where we agree and disagree - Common historical creed (Nicene, Apostle’s)
- Commit to explore, not judge
- Collaboration is not compromising our own beliefs
- Intentionally engage & draw from different sources
- Recognize that the PHC is NOT a church

### Enriching our walk

- Understanding one another helps us love one another
- Educating ourselves produces fruit
  - For our own foundations
  - Clarity in our discussions
- Unity does not require unanimity
- When we yield the definition of the Body of Christ to Jesus, we are able to celebrate Him and *all* His People more readily

Evangelicals & Catholics Together is available at:

<http://www.firstthings.com/article/2007/01/evangelicals--catholics-together-the-christian-mission-in-the-third-millennium-2>

E&CT 2 “The Gift of Salvation” – <http://www.seekgod.ca/ect2.htm>

Books - “*Letters Between a Catholic and an Evangelical: From Debate to Dialogue on the Issues That Separate Us*” by Fr. John R. Waiss, & Rev. James G. McCarthy