



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM  
DE NOVA EVANGELIZATIONE  
PROMOVENDA

*Praeses*

Prot. N. 107/2013

CATHOLIC DISTANCE UNIVERSITY

The New Evangelization must speak to a listener who is increasingly immersed in a scientific and technological world. In the face of this reality, the formation which Christians receive must be adequate in order to confront the many challenges of a secularized and relativistic culture. Thus, the New Evangelization is dedicated to the eradication of religious illiteracy, one of the principal causes for the present crisis of faith. For the elimination of such illiteracy to occur, it is necessary that the pastoral work of the Church continually invests in catechesis and Christian instruction. For, as Pope Benedict XVI has stated in the opening of his recent Motu Proprio *Fides per Doctrinam*, "Faith needs to be strengthened through teaching, so that it can enlighten the minds and hearts of believers." This is an essential condition in order to make the Christian a faithful and courageous witnesses of the Risen Lord.

Consequently, within the Church there exists a pressing need for institutions which are able to provide for the faith formation of adults, education which instills in people an ability to offer to the world an explanation of the faith. One such institution is the Catholic Distance University. Since its founding in 1983, the C.D.U. has provided educational opportunities for thousands of adults to grow in their knowledge and in their love of God and His Church. The Catholic Distance University takes John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution *Ex corde ecclesiae* as its guiding principle and gears many of its courses and seminars around the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and recent magisterial documents. The University's adherence to the *Catechism* serves to highlight the irreplaceable value of this resource as a necessary instrument for the New Evangelization, one which demonstrates the unity connecting the contents of the faith and the act by which we believe.

In addition, the Catholic Distance University provides quality education and faith formation in a manner accessible to all. The University's online educational format emphasizes the essential value of personal exchange and interaction, allowing students the flexibility to determine when they wish to interact.

As the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, the Dicastery "concerned with promoting the religious formation of the faithful of every age and condition (*Fides et Doctrinam*, Art. 3, 1)," I am most grateful to the Catholic Distance University for providing men and women, at this peculiar moment in history, with the fundamental contents of the faith.

  
✠ Rino Fisichella

Vatican City, February 1, 2013

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