



Catholic Strong is a campaign that owes much of its theme to Pope Francis' call on all of us to become Missionary Disciples. This concept he first broached in his 2013 Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)*.

"The Joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew. In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church's journey in years to come."

From there he tasked us to do more, to welcome more, to embrace more by becoming missionary disciples. "I dream of a 'missionary option,' that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation."

The Catholic Strong campaign, has at its core an emphasis on evangelization, to bring back those Catholics who have fallen away and to inspire non-Catholics to join us in a faith that is enthusiastic and joyful.

Through your support, we will create in our parishes and the diocese new programs and initiatives to evangelize to all who wish to find a home in our South Jersey Catholic community.

To learn more, go to southjersecatholicstrong.org or speak with your pastor and your parish's volunteer team.