



Over the coming years we will have many opportunities to reach out to others as we speak and act as disciples of Jesus.

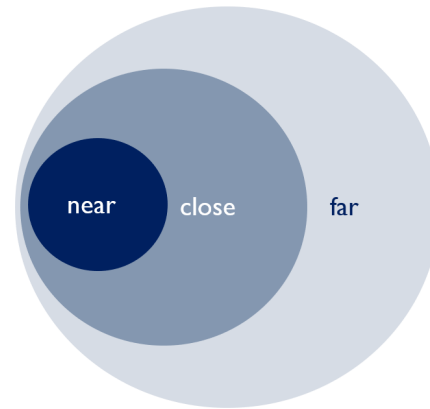
This year needs to be our foundation as we ask for God to prepare the soil into which we may sow the great news about Jesus.

Will you be part of this adventure?

Your servant in Christ

tlatt

Circles of Relationships



NEAR
People for whom I need no introduction

CLOSE
People I need an introduction to

FAR
People who are more than one introduction away




*Diocesan Prayer
Adventure*



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

God has been very gracious to us. We have come to know him because he has opened our eyes and enabled us to trust his Son Jesus as our own Lord and Saviour (2 Cor 4:6). Yet it is the work of the Holy Spirit in our own hearts that has made this possible (2 Cor 4:13).

As we think about sharing our faith in Jesus we need to begin by talking to God about the people we hope to share it with. This is because the same Spirit who opened our hearts needs to open theirs!

There are many reasons why our faith is worth sharing.

1. Jesus was born, lived, died and rose again so that we might be reconciled to God. We want everyone to have this opportunity!
2. Jesus will be returning to call all the world to account. We want everyone to be ready!
3. Jesus gives life and life to the full. We want everyone to enjoy fulfilled life!
4. Jesus heals our hurts. We want everyone to be all that God made them to be!

The bottom line is that all of the benefits we receive from Jesus rest on God's work for us. Yet, God has given us all the incredible privilege of bearing witness to what Jesus has done and continues to do. This is because like us God desires that all people know and love him.

Fancy that, God does not need us to achieve his purposes, but ennobles us by making us part of his work. So, when we pray "Your Kingdom come..." we are not only asking God to hasten the day when the work begun in Jesus is fulfilled, but that we would be strengthened in playing our part as witnesses to God's work.

Since God has given us the role of bearing witness to the work of Jesus so that the world may know and love God. And since coming to trust in God's work relies on the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. We must speak to God about people before speaking to people about God – asking that God will give us opportunity to bear witness to what God has done, and that those who see and hear this witness will have their hearts and minds ready to trust in Jesus.

There are many things we can and should do to be faithful witnesses to God. These involve learning how to share what God has done for each of us and living as consistent disciples of Jesus. However, the first step is for us to be diligent in

*speaking to God about people
before speaking to people about God*

My challenge in 2019 for all of us who regularly worship God in the Diocese of Bendigo is to be active in praying for others.

Will you do this in 4 ways:

1. Prayerfully select 3 people you believe God led you to. These do not need to be 'unknown' people, or even 'far away' people. Indeed, God has given us 'near' people. Filling out the circles of relationship (see back page) may help you work out who God has placed on your heart.

2. Write their names on the bookmark that has come with this brochure. Put the bookmark in a place that will remind you to pray for your 3 people each day. Ideas for placement may include, your current book, bluetacked to the bathroom mirror, or taped to the fridge.

3. Pray that God will open your 3 people's hearts and give you an opportunity to bear witness to what Jesus has done. Your prayer could be something like:

Dear Lord,

You know (name/s). Please open their heart so that they may know you too. Please may I have the opportunity to share with them why Jesus is important to me.

Amen

4. Look for ways to be a blessing to your 3 people. This may be through finding ways to be encouraging, inviting them for a cuppa, sharing a meal, or looking for a way to serve a need they have.