

5B Tools for Sharing Faith through Outreach – Roby Curtis



In his workshop Tools for Sharing Faith through Outreach, Roby Curtis provides practical ways of sharing our faith and reaching out to others to bring them closer to Christ.

Roby Curtis is an Australian father of four from Brisbane whose deep passion for faith, family, and justice is displayed in his service with Blind Eye Ministries, reaching out to the poor and encouraging partnership between the Church, community, and other ministries and organisations. His vision is to see young people in the Catholic Church rise up as living witnesses not only in speech, but in action.

As with each talk and workshop he leads, Roby began this workshop with praise and worship, which lead onto his first point – prayer. Before leading, serving, going on any mission, or carrying out our responsibilities in our parish it is important to clothe ourselves in prayer, prepare for our mission by putting on the full armour of God (Ephesians 6:10-18). We can prepare in prayer silently in adoration for example or excitable ways such as praise and worship, but it is important that you are completely clothed in prayer before, during and after you carry out your ministry. Praying for other is a powerful tool, and Roby encourages praying for others by simply putting a hand on their shoulder as you pray for them once trust and respect has been formed.

What is your testimony?

If someone asked you why you believe in God, what would you say? Could you give them a 5 minute testimony? Communicating our faith is the foundation of outreach, and our testimony is an integral part of that. If you don't have a testimony that you can confidently and authentically deliver to all those who ask, what could you say if they ask why you believe in God or question aspects of the faith? In order to share our faith, we need to know our faith and be able to tell people what God has done for us in our lives. Everyone has their own testimony, a unique story to tell: radical conversions or gradual development of their faith, so it is important that we know ours.

It's important not to force our faith on others or impose what we believe, because more often than not, this leads to resentment and immediately adds distance between both parties, reducing the possibility of formation of good relationships. Roby suggests using a more social approach in order to build a relationship first and open opportunities for them to share their stories, to ask about our faith so we can share with them our own testimonies and help them in their own journey to Christ. This can be done by simply putting out scripture when you meet or even inviting them to mass, preparing them and explaining things beforehand so that it is not too overwhelming or confusing.

“The amount that we are willing to bless and give to people, is the amount that God will give back”

It's about blessing people as we build relationships with them, going the extra mile and doing something that they will appreciate, because when we serve others, when we bless them, we communicate our heart to them and they see what we are willing to do for them. Roby tells us to really give more than the bare minimum to step out of our comfort zone because God will meet us halfway.

Music is a very useful tool in outreach, it is a global language and reaches people on different levels. Music can be used to break the ice and just connect with people by simply playing a song that they can relate with or covers of songs that they are familiar with (clean songs of course). Reaching people on their interests, for example skating, spoken word, or sports can be used to organise events and programmes to invite them to and aids in developing a relationship with them.

It is also very important to know and acknowledge that we don't know everything and we aren't always the right person to talk to about certain things. Not everyone has extensive knowledge in theology, or liturgy, or apologetics, and can't answer some questions around those areas and, in the same way, we haven't gone through the same things as other people so sometimes it may be more useful to refer them to someone who has, who can offer insight and wisdom that we can't.

As Christians, we are called to be missionaries of the faith, to share God's word to those around us. This is not an easy mission, although we are called to step out of our comfort zones and prepare ourselves to use these tools to reach people in a way that will help others to see Christ in their lives.

By Gino Pimentel