

14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, 3 July 2022

Scriptures: Isaiah 66:10-14; Galatians 6:14-18; Luke 10:1-9

Homily: Fr. Ken

When we reflect critically and prayerfully on today's scriptural readings, one theme seems prominent, the theme of simplicity.

In the Gospel from St. Luke, Jesus offers clear and concise directives to those who are to be his disciples in the world. First among these directives is the commission to go forth from the comfort of family and friends in order to bring the good news to the people and places that Jesus would visit.

A "mobile missiology" as it were, required Jesus' disciples to be aware of the dangers that could lie ahead. Jesus was sending them out "like lambs among wolves", yet to proceed nonetheless.

Instead of packing for every eventuality, they were to travel lightly and to rely on the hospitality of those they went to serve.

Their mission of preaching the advent of the reign of God was more important than food or drink or any other creature comfort.

As one who took Jesus at his very word, St. Paul, in the second reading, did not boast about his excellent secular education or the fact that he had studied under a notable rabbi. Paul did boast, but instead of touting his accomplishments, he boasted about his absolute adherence to Jesus Christ and the fact that he was privileged to suffer for belonging to Christ.

Paul's simplicity, and that of the other early disciples, calls each of us to reflect on our own lifestyle and our discipleship, so we may assess how closely we reflect the simplicity of Jesus, the One who has called us to follow him.

In his book titled *Private Journal*, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Swiss philosopher Henri-Frederic Amiel wrote the following about the importance of simplicity: "All of us are generally cumbered up with the thousand and one hindrances and duties that wind around us with their spider threads and fetter the movement of our wings. In order to simplify one's duties, one's business, and one's life, a person must know how to disengage what is essential from the detail in which it is enwrapped, for everything cannot be equally considered. It is a lack of order that makes us slaves; the confusion of today discounts the freedom of tomorrow".

St. Pope John XXIII said: "I must strip my views of all useless foliage and concentrate on what is truth, justice, and charity".

At the time of the election of Pope Francis, as people watched the elaborate preparations of the cardinals as they went about the business of electing a successor to Pope Benedict, they may have found it difficult to detect simplicity. But the cardinals did elect Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio who became Pope Francis. He is a man who embodies simplicity, a man dedicated to evangelization, and profoundly committed to social justice and to the poor of the world, just as his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi.

When Jesus sent forth his disciples on their first missionary journey, they were unencumbered and free to follow his directives. Not bound by any other protocol except that of preaching the good news, they were successful in their efforts. With joy they returned to Jesus to give an account of their work.

When each one of us hears the final call to come home to God, we will also need to give an account of ourselves and our service. We will be asked how well we cleansed ourselves of all "useless foliage" and concentrated on what is truth, justice, love, and service to the Gospel and specifically what we did in our lives to help all those in need, especially the poor and marginalized of our world.

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