Tuesday of the Twenty-third Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 6:12-19): Jesus departed to the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer to God. When day came, he called his disciples to himself, and from them he chose Twelve, whom he also named Apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called a Zealot, and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

And he came down with them and stood on a stretch of level ground. A great crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon came to hear him...

The Church: the ministerial priesthood and the Hierarchy

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Today, we remember Christ as praying all night before choosing —from his disciples— the twelve Apostles. They —who never cease to be the people of God— will have a "mission within the mission" of the Church: to nurture, to encourage and to sustain the sanctity of all the faithful.

Some are called by God to the "ministerial priesthood": they are the "ordained faithful". A power has been bestowed upon them; but this is a "sacred power" to dispense the Bread and to preach the Word: a power to serve. They form the "Hierarchy", something which today sounds bad because it is seen with worldly eyes. In the Church the hierarchical element is not a privileged "status" but a "functional element", whose radical aim is to serve our brothers. "Ministry" exactly means service. The Pope's title, precisely, is "The Servant of the Servants of God".

—O Jesus, we request from You pastors with a heart like Yours. You, Who came not to be served but to serve.