

Friday of the Second Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mk 3:13-19): Jesus went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him. He appointed Twelve, whom he also named Apostles, that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach and to have authority to drive out demons: He appointed the Twelve: Simon, whom he named Peter; James, son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James, whom he named Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder; Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus; Thaddeus, Simon the Cananean, and Judas Iscariot who betrayed him.

“Jesus went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted”

Fr. Jordi POU i Sabater
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Today, the Gospel considers the theology of Christian vocation: “The Lord called those he wanted to be with him and sent them to be apostles” (cf. Mk 3:13-14). First, He calls them: For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy (cf. Eph 1:4). God loves us, shaping us in Christ, encouraging us to develop the characteristics necessary for us to become His children. These qualities are best understood when we consider them from a vocational perspective; vocation is the “role” in life that God's plan of redemption has allotted us so that we can fulfill our part in His work of redemption. Only by discovering your God-given vocation—the true reasons for your life—and by fulfilling it on His terms, will you come to know yourself as God knows you.

And what does God require of those He calls? He asks us to live close to Him as we serve Him, and in return, He promises to stay close to us. Yet, God speaks to each one of us individually and specifically. “One day perhaps an ordinary Christian, just like you, opened your eyes to horizons both deep and new, yet as old as the Gospel. He suggested to you the prospect of following Christ earnestly, seriously, of

becoming an apostle of apostles. Perhaps you lost your balance then and didn't recover it. Your complacency wasn't quite replaced by true peace until you freely said “yes” to God, because you wanted to, which is the most supernatural of reasons. And in its wake came a strong, constant joy, which disappears only when you abandon him” (Saint Josemaria).

It is a blessing, but it is a blessing that can only be fully realized when we become holy through our willingness to serve, through prayer, and through the blessed sacraments. “All the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; by this holiness as such a more humane manner of living is promoted in this earthly society” (Second Vatican Council).

This is how we learn of our apostolic mission of taking Christ to others. Having Him ourselves first, so that we can share Him. Today, and every day, we must meditate upon the true nature of our call to vocation, answering His call with an increased love, born of our increased understanding of what He calls us to do and to be.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“I exhort you to present your bodies’ (Rom 12:1). By pleading in this manner the Apostle elevates all men to the dignity of the priesthood: to present our bodies as a living host.” (Saint Peter Chrysologus)

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“Goodness always tends to spread. As it expands, goodness takes root and develops (...). In this regard, several sayings of Saint Paul will not surprise us: ‘The love of Christ urges us on’ (2 Cor 5:14); ‘Woe to me if I do not proclaim the Gospel’ (1 Cor 9:16).” (Francis)

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“From the beginning of his public life Jesus chose certain men, twelve in number, to be with him and to participate in his mission. He gives the Twelve a share in his authority and ‘sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal’ (Lk 9:2) (...).” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N° 551)