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
(Sant Jordi Desvalls, Girona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel summarizes the theology of the Christian vocation: the Lord summons those He wants to be with Him and sends them forth to be apostles (cf. Mk 3:13-14). First, He summons them: before the creation of the world, He destined us to be holy (cf. Eph 1:4). He loves us in Christ, and in Him He shapes us, giving us the qualities to be His children. Our qualities are only understood in light of our vocation; the vocation is the "role" He has given us in redemption. It is in discovering the innermost "why" of my existence that I feel fully "myself," when I live my vocation.

And for what has He called us? To be with Him. This call implies a response: "Open your own hearts to Jesus and tell him your story. I don't want to generalize. But 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 Josemaría).

It is a gift, but also a task: holiness through prayer and the sacraments, and, in addition, personal struggle. "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 human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society" (Second Vatican Council).

Thus, we can understand the apostolic mission: to bring Christ to others; to possess Him and to share

Him. Today, we can take the time to consider the call more carefully and refine the details of our loving response.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "'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)

- "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)

- "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, № 551)