

October 28th: Feast of Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles

Gospel text (Lk 6:12-19): Jesus went up 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 and to be healed of their diseases; and even those who were tormented by unclean spirits were cured. Everyone in the crowd sought to touch him because power came forth from him and healed them all.

«Jesus went up to the mountain to pray»

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Today, we may contemplate a full day in the life of Jesus. A life with two clear sides: prayer and action. If, as Christians, we are to imitate Jesus' life, we cannot prescind any of these two dimensions. All Christians, even those who are consecrated to a contemplative life, have, and must have, certain moments for praying and certain others for action. The length of time for each one may, of course, vary. We can see that even friars and nuns in close orders devote a good part of their time to some kind of work. On the other hand, those of us that are more "secular", if we wish to imitate Jesus, we should not carry out a frantic activity without spreading it with a prayer. St. Jerome says: "Even though the

Apostle ordered us to pray all the time, (...) we must devote to this exercise certain previously determined hours.”

Did Jesus need these lengthy hours of lonely prayer, when everybody else was asleep? Theologians study the psychology of Jesus man: up to which point had He direct access to divinity and up to which point was He “one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin” (He 4:15). To the point we consider him closer to us, his praying “practice”, must be evidently a clear example for us.

Once we have well established our praying, it only remains for us to imitate him in action. In today's fragment, we can see him “organizing the Church”, that is, choosing those who were to be his future evangelists, the followers of his mission on earth: “When day came, he called his disciples to himself, and from them he chose Twelve, whom he also named Apostles” (Lk 6:13). We find him, later on, healing all types of sicknesses. “Everyone in the crowd sought to touch him because power came forth from him and healed them all” (Lk 6:19), the Evangelist says. So that our identification with him may be complete, we only need that this power to heal everybody may also come forth from us. This will only be possible if we remain in him so that we can bear plenty of fruit (cf. Jn 15:4).