

Connecting With the Sunday Readings

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

We are about two thousand years removed from the earthly life of Jesus. The Gospels connect us with Jesus, but there is much more. That “much more” is most likely why we are among his followers today. We received Jesus, and all that he was about, from others, literally, thousands of others. One way to appreciate this passing on of Christian faith (our faith) is to imagine what Jesus was thinking as his life on earth was drawing to a close.

For the most part, the area he traveled was smaller than the size of New Jersey. When a few listeners gathered, he spoke to them. He did many rather remarkable deeds, but the eyewitnesses were few. His reputation as a good man, a rather remarkable man who might be the Messiah, spread locally but there was no indication that he attracted that many followers. Toward the end of his life, when he suffered the death of a criminal, there were only three people at his side. And even after he rose from the dead, the numbers who saw him were small. Still, he had a plan for spreading his Good News and we read about how that began in today’s Gospel.

A Gospel Word for the Home

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

Seventy-two was the number sent by Jesus. That’s not exactly the size of a Roman legion, but good enough. They were among the first who were to spread the good word about Jesus, about what he taught and stood for, and about the remarkable feats he was doing. Tell others, he said, about the fact that the Kingdom of God has now begun. It may not be what they were expecting, but it is what it is. Peace is now available: peace with God, peace with each other, and peace within their hearts. It’s not about politics, power, or wealth. It’s about how we related to God and how God relates to us. And it’s about how we can relate to each other. It’s about what’s really important.

So two by two they went, most likely, a motley bunch. They were to depend on the generosity of those they visited for sustenance. Their message was about peace. If their message was unwelcomed or ignored, they were to return to the road and move on. He didn’t want his first missionaries to be discouraged. He would say the same thing today to those who share his message. Offer what you have and what you believe. If others accept it, good for all of you. If they don’t (for whatever reason), don’t take it personally. You’re not in charge. No one of us ever is.

Parent Survival

One of the greatest worries of Christian parents these days is whether their children will share their faith. Clearly, this does not happen automatically. So should parents think about this, and is there anything in today's Gospel that might help us? There is. Again, reflect on the spirit that Jesus advocates when he sends out the seventy-two. Go without baggage. Travel light. Translated into today's world, that might mean present your faith without extras. The heart of Christian faith is the acceptance of Jesus and his message of love and peace. It's a very spiritual matter. If our children (young and old) take that much in, rejoice. If they want more, you know where to go to get it. Ask the parish staff for help. They are there to assist you.

If for any reason, your children don't accept what you are offering at the moment, let it go. Stay connected and be open for something to happen at a later time. Shake the dust of that first moment off your feet. And, most of all remain peaceful. Your children are God's no matter what. And God's Spirit works in ways we cannot even imagine.

Car or Meal Talk

Talk about who the ones are today being sent to spread the message of Jesus. Most would say priests and sisters. But, who else?

One-Line Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to proclaim your Good News. Amen.