

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, May 14th 2014

“It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain” ... John

“It was not you who chose me but I who chose you ...”

In mind's eye, I'm back on the dusty playground of St. Mary's Grade School while teams were being chosen for just about any sport or game you could name- volleyball, softball, dodge ball - desperately hoping to hear my name called before one of the teams had to take either me or the other miserable kid standing forlornly beside me.

Ouch! Anyone else like that out there????

Yet today we read that the Lord of the Universe has chosen even us playground losers for his team. WOW!

And what do we have to do to be worthy of this honor? “Go and bear fruit that will remain.”

I've been pondering what this means since we former team rejects will never cure cancer, compose a hymn that competes with “Ode to Joy” or work in Calcutta's slums. Then I think of a humble woman who became an icon to a generation of Creighton students.

I don't even know her name but for years she checked freshmen into the cafeteria, smiling warmly at each, calling them “baby” and asking them sincerely how their days had gone. She taught students the supreme lesson of today's Gospel, “love one another,” just by loving them. Whenever I asked students to list people who lived our Catholic Jesuit mission, she won, hands down.

So if you are overwhelmed with the idea of God actually choosing you for his team (even if you always struck out), don't be intimidated. Like our “Hey, baby” cafeteria worker, remember that there

are about a zillion small things you can do in your ordinary life to “bear fruit that will remain” and justify your place on God’s team.

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