

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Oct 28th 2016

Today is the feast of the Apostles, Simon and Jude. As we celebrate their lives we remember the other Apostles and the larger gathering of people we call disciples. They are the very foundation of our church.

The Twelve Apostles, were chosen from among the disciples of Jesus; they were the ones who followed Jesus because they sensed in him something wonderful, something awaited, something special and appealing. "The Twelve" as they are referred to sometimes in the New Testament were called by Jesus to be his special followers among his friends.

Today's gospel reading recounts the calling of the Twelve Apostles from St. Luke's gospel. The number twelve is significant because it represents the twelve tribes of Israel; Jude and Simon and the other ten called by Jesus became the New Israel. It was a significant role in the early church.

I used to think that the disciples were so lucky because they knew Jesus, saw him day by day, and walked with him the roads of Palestine. They saw the great effect he had on others through his preaching, miracles, and the gentle, loving actions towards those in need. It must have been very easy to follow him because they were simply with Jesus in the flesh.

Wrong! the beauty of Jesus' call is that it went out to very ordinary people. They didn't have to be well prepared and eager to get the call to follow him. they just had to receive his call.

In other words, they were just like any one of us. What made them at all special was that they were called. They didn't need to go through a long period of preparation. they just had to hear his call and respond to it by following in his footsteps.

And for us? Ordinary people, gifted, but not any more so than anyone around us. Not the strongest, not the brightest, not the most attractive, not the nicest: just us.

What makes us special as modern disciples is the fact that we have been called – in a word, it's all in God's choosing. Why does God choose us? whatever God does is love because as we know from our sacred scriptures: God IS love. On our part we only need to say "yes" to the call and to follow Jesus. No need to check our credentials, simply respond in faith, hope and love.

That's what Simon and Jude did: just said yes to call to follow Jesus. They had no clue as to where that would lead them.

Jesus, help me to respond to the call to be your disciple. Be with me as I figure out the ways and means of my calling. Your Word is life; let me hear and appreciate with joy that word of calling and respond generously.

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