

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Reading I: Isaiah 66:10-14c

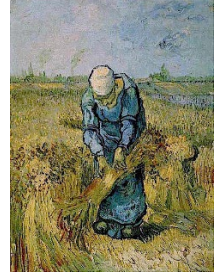
Responsorial Psalm: 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20

Reading II: Galatians 6:14-18

Gospel: Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 or 10:1-9

Readings may be found on the US Bishop's website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/070322.cfm>



The Gospel selection follows immediately after the passage from last Sunday where Jesus was calling people to be disciples. Jesus now sends those who have responded out to announce that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Jesus first gives some instructions. They are to go in pairs to sustain and partner in the ministry. God works through community and not lone rangers. The success of the ministry depends upon God and not just an individual's effort. They are to depend on God's providence for protection and all that they need so no provisions are necessary. They are also not to move from one house to the next seeking better food or accommodations. They are to be focused on sharing the message and their comfort.

If they are not welcomed in a place, they are to move onwards. It is not their role to argue. It is the Holy Spirit who opens hearts and if a person or village is not open, the disciples' efforts will be in vain. Their concern should not be about what they are able to do nor what power they have. Their concern should be that they are serving God and participating in the reign of God.

The work of evangelization is central to the mission of the Church. Evangelization is sharing good and life changing news. To bring a really good message to someone is to make a difference in her or his life. The message that the disciples bring is that God's reign is at hand. In the face of Roman occupation, oppression, poverty, disease, and many other sufferings, people longed for a new beginning, a new action by God. The disciples were sent to announce this message and manifest it by healing the sick. All Christians are called to share good news with others. For some, it will be presenting the Christian tradition. For others, it will be through sharing their journey of faith. For everyone, it will be presented in the way one lives and treats other people.

The first reading comes from the later part of Isaiah when the people faced many struggles as they returned from 60 to 70 years in exile. Babylon had destroyed the Temple and looted the city. Everything was in ruins. Isaiah reminds them that it is God who freed them from being prisoners of war and was bringing them back to their homeland. God had many more blessings awaiting them. "I will spread prosperity over Jerusalem like a river." God always has good for God's people. This image of God is often overlooked as people focus on the struggles and pains of life. The prophet invites people to step back and view the wide picture to recognize all the blessings that God has given.

The second reading is the conclusion of the letter to the Galatians. Paul lays out for them the essentials that he had presented earlier in the letter. Circumcision and following the Law do not save a person. It is Christ's death and resurrection that reunite people with God. In Christ's great sacrificial love, humanity has come experienced God's mercy and forgiveness. No amount of human effort can earn God's forgiveness. God's generous love opens the way for a new life in union with God.

Reflection Questions:

How does Jesus' invitation to trust God and others for your daily needs strike you?

Do you have examples of how you have trusted God?

What are some of the blessings that you have that you often overlook?

How would others encounter "good news" in your words and deeds?

Themes

Evangelization

Reign of God

Witness of our lives

Gratitude

Saving love

St Francis Xavier

Prayer Suggestions:

For wisdom: that we may recognize the personal, communal, and social "wolves" that distract us from following Christ and be open to God's inspiration and guidance

For deeper trust: that we may rely more fully on God's providence and less on our possessions and status

For each of us: that we may hear God's call and share in the mission of the church by bringing hope, relieving burdens, and offering compassionate understanding to all who touch our lives

For the grace to embrace the cross: that we may accept the sufferings of life and allow them to transform us into new creations in Christ