

July 12, 2009

15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Cycle B)



### Gospel reading

### Mark 6:7-13

Jesus summoned the Twelve\* and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over unclean spirits. He instructed them to take nothing for the journey but a walking stick —no food, no sack, no money in their belts. They were, however, to wear sandals but not a second tunic. He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave. Whatever place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave there and shake the dust off your feet in testimony against them.” So they went off and preached repentance. The Twelve drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

*\*The Greek word for “apostle” means “one sent out.”*

### Brief commentary:

After the rejection in Nazareth by his own people, Jesus went to other places to preach. Today we read how he sent out his closest friends, the Twelve, with special instructions and powers. Like Jesus, the apostles were to go out preaching and teaching the Good News. They too, like their Lord and the prophet Amos in today’s First Reading, will face rejection. Jesus gave them detailed instructions as to what to carry and how long to stay in any given place. These were indications for the early Christians of the need to move quickly and urgently. We find a strong connection between these instructions and the ones given by God to the Israelites before they fled Egypt. The notion of traveling light, or to “take nothing for the journey,” rather than being a burden makes the traveling easier. There is no need to carry heavy things; trust in God is enough.

We know that Mark wrote his Gospel around the year 70 A.D. At this time of persecution and rejection by both Jews and Romans, this early Gospel encouraged his readers to always trust in God’s care.

#### Today’s reading offers three significant messages:

- The disciples should not place their trust in “what” they bring to the mission, but on “who” they proclaim.
- Mark conveys urgency in the proclamation of the Good News. Do not try to convince the reluctant. The mission is pressing, so the evangelizers must keep moving.
- Jesus and his followers lived on the margins of society, always on the edge of rejection.

### For our shared or personal reflection:

*After a brief pause for silent reflection share your answers, ideas or feelings.*

1. Do I welcome into my life the people who live in the margins of today’s society? Do they walk away from me “shaking the dust off their feet” because I do not welcome them? Explain.
2. Am I putting all my trust in the “baggage” that I have collected throughout my life instead of traveling light trusting in God?

Suggested readings: Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraphs 551; 765; 1506; 1511.