

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



Without cost you have received;
without cost you are to give."

Reading 1 Exodus 19:2-6a

In those days, the Israelites came to the desert of Sinai and pitched camp.
While Israel was encamped here in front of the mountain,
Moses went up the mountain to God.

Then the LORD called to him and said, "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob; tell the Israelites:

You have seen for yourselves how I treated the Egyptians
and how I bore you up on eagle wings and brought you here to myself.
Therefore, if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant,
you shall be my special possession, dearer to me than all other people, though all the earth is mine.

You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation."

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 100:1-2, 3, 5

R. We are his people: the sheep of his flock.

Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands; serve the LORD with gladness;
come before him with joyful song.

Know that the LORD is God; he made us, his we are;
his people, the flock he tends.

The LORD is good: his kindness endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

Reading 2 Romans 5:6-11

Brothers and sisters: Christ, while we were still helpless,
yet died at the appointed time for the ungodly.

Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person,
though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die.

But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

How much more then, since we are now justified by his blood,
will we be saved through him from the wrath.

Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life.

Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Gospel Matthew 9:36—10:8

At the sight of the crowds, Jesus' heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd.

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest." Then he summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits to drive them out and to cure every disease and every illness.



The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus; Simon from Cana, and Judas Iscariot who betrayed him. Jesus sent out these twelve after instructing them thus,

"Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

As you go, make this proclamation:

The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons.

Without cost you have received;

without cost you are to give."

LIBERATING PROGRAM

Many Christians think they are living their faith responsibly because they're concerned with fulfilling determined religious practices and they try to adjust their behavior to some moral laws and some church norms.

In addition, many Christian communities think they are faithfully fulfilling their mission because they are eager to offer services of catechism and education in the faith, and they make the effort to celebrate the Christian cult with dignity.

Is this the only thing Jesus wanted to get started when he sent his disciples through the world? Is this the life he wanted to infuse in the heart of history?

We need to listen once again to Jesus' words in order to rediscover the true mission of believers in the midst of our society. Here's how the Gospel writer Matthew puts his command: «Go and proclaim that the reign of heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. Give freely what you have freely received».

Our first task also today is to proclaim that God is near to us, working to save the happiness of humanity. But this announcement of a saving God isn't made only by means of speeches and suggestive words. It's not ensured just by catechism or religion classes. Jesus reminds us of the way to proclaim God: work freely to infuse new life into people.

«Heal the sick», that is to say, free people from all that robs them of life and makes them suffer. Heal the soul and the body of those who feel themselves destroyed by pain and who are deformed because of the merciless harshness of their daily life.

«Raise the dead», that is to say, free people from that which blocks their lives and kills their hope. Awaken again the love for life, the trust in God, the will to struggle and the desire for liberty in so many men and women in whom life goes about dying little by little.

«Cleanse lepers», that is to say, cleanse this society of so much lying, hypocrisy and business as usual. Help people to live with more truth, simplicity and honesty.

«Cast out demons», that is to say, free people from so many idols that enslave us, possess us and pervert our living together. There where people are being freed, there is God being announced.

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