

Connecting with the Sunday Readings

**Fourteenth Sunday of
Ordinary Time**

Gospel Word
Luke 10:1–12,
17–20

We are about two thousand years removed from the earthly life of Jesus. The Gospels connect us with Jesus, but there is much more. That “much more” is most likely why we are among his followers today. We receive Jesus, and all that he is about from others, literally thousands of others. One way to appreciate this passing on of Christian faith (our faith) is to imagine what Jesus was thinking as his life on earth was drawing to a close.

For the most part, the area he traveled was smaller than the size of New Jersey. When a few listeners gathered, he spoke to them. He did many rather remarkable deeds, but the eyewitnesses were few. His reputation as a good man, a rather remarkable man who might be the Messiah, spread locally, but there was no indication that he attracted that many followers. Toward the end of his life, when he suffered the death of a criminal, there were only three people at his side. And even after he rose from the dead, the numbers who saw him were small. Still, he had a plan for spreading his Good News and we read about how that began in today’s Gospel reading. And so he sent seventy-two followers—a small number to spread the good word about the reign of God. It is here.

So they went, most likely, a motley bunch. They were to travel two by two and depend for sustenance on the generosity of those they visited. Their message was about peace. If their message was unwelcomed or ignored, they were to return to the road and move on. Offer what you have and what you believe. If others accept it, good for all of you. If they don’t (for whatever reason), don’t take it personally. You’re not totally in charge. In fact, none of us ever are.

Living the Word

In addition to accepting hospitality, the disciples were also sent to heal the sick. In short, like the twelve Apostles sent out earlier (Luke 9:1–6), they were to do what Jesus did: share table fellowship with others, even sinners, and perform the signs that gave evidence about the nearness of the Kingdom of God. We stand in a long line of people who have done that. Think back to your own roots, the very beginnings of your lineage. Someone somewhere heard the proclamation of the Good News and it carried through generations to you.

Some of today’s missionaries travel to distant lands to proclaim the word of God. Some missionaries do it across the breakfast table or in an office or a taxicab. The pattern for proclaiming the Kingdom of God with others was the same then as it is now. Do what Jesus did: share table fellowship with others, even sinners, and perform the signs that gave evidence about the nearness of the Kingdom of God. You may think, “Well, I cannot perform miracles or heal people.” Maybe the signs and miracles of Jesus’ disciples today are subtler. Perhaps the offer of friendship or unconditional love heals a person. What about the times we participate in projects such as developing clean water for persons in underdeveloped countries; the times we teach an adult to read or a child to have self confidence; the times we advocate for better working conditions or health benefits for others? If you have been on the receiving end you might say “It is a miracle.”

One-line Prayer

Son of God, show us how to
proclaim the Kingdom of God.
Amen.

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A Gospel Word for the Home

Luke 10:1–12, 17–20

Seventy-two was the number sent by Jesus. That’s not exactly the size of a Roman legion, but good enough. They were among the first who were to spread the good word about Jesus, about what he taught and stood for, and about the remarkable feats he was doing. Tell others, he said, about the fact that the Kingdom of God has now begun. It may not be what they were expecting, but it is what it is. Peace is now available: peace with God, peace with each other, and peace within their hearts. It’s not about politics, power, or wealth. It’s about how we related to God and how God relates to us. And it’s about how we can relate to each other. It’s about what’s really important.

So two by two they went, most likely, a motley bunch. They were to depend on the generosity of those they visited for sustenance. Their message was about peace. If their message was unwelcomed or ignored, they were to return to the road and move on. He didn’t want his first missionaries to be discouraged. He would say the same thing today to those who share his message. Offer what you have and what you believe. If others accept it, good for all of you. If they don’t (for whatever reason), don’t take it personally. You’re not in charge. No one of us ever is.

Parent Survival

One of the greatest worries of Christian parents these days is whether their children will share their faith. Clearly, this does not happen automatically. So should parents think about this, and is there anything in today's Gospel that might help us? There is. Again, reflect on the spirit that Jesus advocates when he sends out the seventy-two. Go without baggage. Travel light. Translated into today's world, that might mean present your faith without extras. The heart of Christian faith is the acceptance of Jesus and his message of love and peace. It's a very spiritual matter. If our children (young and old) take that much in, rejoice. If they want more, you know where to go to get it. Ask the parish staff for help. They are there to assist you.

If for any reason, your children don't accept what you are offering at the moment, let it go. Stay connected and be open for something to happen at a later time. Shake the dust of that first moment off your feet. And, most of all remain peaceful. Your children are God's no matter what. And God's Spirit works in ways we cannot even imagine.

Car or Meal Talk

Talk about who the ones are today being sent to spread the message of Jesus. Most would say priests and sisters. But, who else?

One-Line Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to proclaim your Good News. Amen.