



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 from there. 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. They drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Introductory Prayer: Father, I come before you today hungry for all the graces you desire for me in this meditation. I believe in your goodness. I wish to become more like your son, Jesus Christ, every day. I want to live a life of self-giving love like Christ. Thank you for your grace.

Petition: Christ Jesus, grant me a spirit of teamwork in spreading your Gospel.

1. Where Two or Three Are Gathered...: Christ sent out his apostles in pairs. The fact that the Gospel mentions this detail shows that it is not just an accident. There are some passages in Matthew's Gospel that can shed some light on this desire of Christ. First, "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20). The apostles are first and foremost called to witness to Christ by their example. They are to foster communion and charity among themselves, so that others, seeing how they

interact with each other, will be led to exclaim, “See how they love one another!” The apostle-teams exhibited oneness of heart and soul, sharing in common what they were able to procure: lodging, success, failure. With such an attitude, Christ promises that he would be there in their midst.

2. Another Witness: “If you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses” (Matthew 18:16). The word of one person, who has witnessed a miraculous event alone, is often taken as no more than the word of a crazy man. However, if more than one person confesses to having witnessed the event, there is much stronger proof. The apostles went about witnessing to the things that Jesus was doing and the signs he was working: healing the sick, casting out demons, etc. It is wonderful to team up with fellow Christians in the workplace or in the family, in order to witness to the work of Christ in our lives.

3. Apostolic Efficacy: Jesus makes it clear: with regard to the mission, another apostle is much more important than other material tools. Jesus teaches us here the principle of teamwork. An apostolic “colleague” helps us to be vigilant against dangers to our health and well-being (physical and spiritual). Prayer can be in community; Jesus assures that “if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven” (Matthew 18:19). Working in a team also helps to improve apostolic efficacy: Each enriches the other with the exchange of knowledge, personal and lived experiences, and views on the situation. Each complements the other, contributing their God-given gifts, abilities and qualities. “Two heads are better than one.”

Conversation with Christ: You sent your apostles out in twos, Lord Jesus, to teach me about the importance of teamwork. Help me not presume that I am alone in the mission. When I try to do everything myself, sometimes it may be out of subtle pride. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the gift of apostolic colleagues. Increase in my heart true fraternal charity for those who work alongside me in building up your kingdom, so that the world may believe.

Resolution: I will make it a point to involve an apostolic colleague in my effort to help some friend or family member encounter Christ.