

Learning to Follow Directions

Daily Gospel / Liturgical Cycle B

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Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint 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 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. The Twelve drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Introductory Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I believe in you, and I believe that I must follow your will in all that I do. I hope in you, and I place my hope in what you have planned for me today. Teach me not to place my hope in created things, but only in your will. Lord, I love you, and I desire to love your will with greater fervor. Open my heart to respond to your will with generosity and joy.

Petition:

Lord, help me to transmit your message through my words and actions.

1. Two By Two:

Our Lord didn't send the apostles out in their mission as isolated individuals, but in pairs. Jesus wanted them to realize that alone they would not be strong enough. Alone they would be vulnerable to attacks. Alone they might succumb to temptation and discouragement. Jesus' disciples were not alone as they labored to carry out their mission, and neither are we. The mission we have of following Jesus may be difficult at times, but Jesus knows this. He places people in our path to help and support us. We must realize that we need the help of others and that others also need our help. We are not alone!

2. Take Nothing:

Jesus wanted his apostles to realize that he is in charge of the mission. Jesus tells them to leave at home what we would consider basic items necessary for any trip. This was a radical lesson for the apostles, as it is for us. Jesus doesn't want us to rely on our personal efforts, the advanced technology of the day, or any other methods or elements that we can invent for our security or success. He is the origin of any success in our lives, and he alone gives true security. Jesus tells the apostles to take nothing on their journey, except him.

3. They Went Off:

The apostles then went to preach repentance and cure the sick. They trusted in Jesus and in the mission he had entrusted to them. As they began to work, they saw that their efforts were bearing fruit. The people they encountered were responsive. They could see that they were changing lives. In our own lives we don't often encounter receptive crowds, open and eager to hear about Christ and prepared to amend their lives and start off on a new path. We often find hostility and opposition. In either situation — success or failure — as we try to build Christ's Kingdom, we must trust in him and remember that we are called to be faithful, not necessarily successful from a human standpoint.

Conversation with Christ:

Lord Jesus, you've given me a mission to spread your Gospel among my family members, friends and coworkers, everyone I encounter. Help me to be faithful to this mission and to undertake it in the way you wish, not the way it most pleases me.

Resolution:

I will fulfill my prayer commitments today with generosity and fidelity.