



Jesus summoned the Twelve and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money, nor let no one take a second tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there and leave from there. And as for those who do not welcome you, when you leave that town, shake the dust from your feet in testimony against them." Then they set out and went from village to village proclaiming the Good News and curing diseases everywhere.

Introductory Prayer: Lord, you are the author of life and the giver of all that is good. You are the Prince of Peace and my mainstay. You are my healer and the cure itself. I need you, and I need to give you. I love you and commit myself to you entirely, knowing you could never let me down or deceive me. Thank you for giving me your very self.

Petition: Lord, help me to rely on your grace and not on worldly things.

1. The Mission: Christ sends out his apostles to preach the good news with inadequate supplies. They are charged to trust in Providence. Jesus shrinks their suitcases to practically nothing. How could they touch people? Like St. Paul they were able to understand that Jesus was guiding their steps from a discreet distance: "I consider all as loss for the surpassing knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Philippians 3:8). Jesus gave them restrictions to teach them that their strength in bearing fruit lies in their love for him

rather than in their material possessions or management skills. Do I carry this same conviction in the home, in the office, or running the errands? Am I willing to go two miles if the local Church community presses me into service for one mile?

2. Detached from All Things: Christ warns us about hoarding possessions, not so much by what he says, but by what he does. He doesn't send his friends out like sheep among wolves so he can retire to a comfortable sofa all weekend long. By giving them a good example first, Jesus has already demonstrated what is necessary for apostolic success. He was born in a musty cave. His first bed was an animal trough. His first apostolic success, at the age of twelve, was cut short by his parents who intimated to him that his timing was off. He sent Peter to pull coins out of a fish's mouth because he had no money to pay the tax. He allowed simple things — a woman at a well, a funeral march in a village — to become moments remembered worldwide, for ages to come, by countless followers. Later, he would be laid in someone else's grave. Material welfare alone cannot obtain what the Lord is sending us to accomplish!

3. A Free Choice: Jesus didn't make the disciples go off to a survival camp. Nevertheless, the harder the conditions were, the more attraction they felt at being involved. These Galilean fishermen freely accepted an unknown trade. They had discovered a treasure that so filled them with enthusiasm they sold everything in order to get hold of it and share it. This treasure is Christ. The Gospel says, "Then they set out and went from village to village..." It didn't take the apostles long to decide what they wanted to do, for within their vessels of clay they carried a treasure which needed to spread far and wide.

Conversation with Christ: Lord Jesus, as wonderful as material things are, they do not amount to anything compared to possessing you and teaching others about you. See the efforts I so intensely perform for your sake and bless them. Lord, help me, as you helped St. Paul, to continue fighting for a heavenly crown that doesn't fade or rust.

Resolution: Today I will find a moment to make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and pray earnestly for the missionary intentions of the Holy Father for this month.