

Gospel Reflection

Jesus explained two thousand years ago what we know to be true – that “the harvest is abundant but the laborers are few” (Matthew 9:37). We are always searching for more laborers for the harvest of the Master. Among all the baptized, priests and others who have chosen a religious life have given over their entire lives to be laborers in God’s vineyard. They have answered God’s call in a unique way to work the harvest and to proclaim by word and action – like Peter, Andrew, and the rest of the Twelve – that the kingdom of heaven is indeed at hand. We know that God will not leave us as “sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36), and so we trust that our prayers and efforts will yield the shepherds that God desires for us.

Just as the people of Israel were a nation of priests and a holy people, so are we all who bear the name of Christ. Jesus died for all of us. This alone justifies us and makes us holy to the point of salvation. That’s how Paul sees it anyway. And in thinking about it, isn’t every man, woman, and child who lives out the gospel message a priest in his or her own right, reconciled to the Father by Jesus? After all, at our baptism, each of us is received into “the royal priesthood of the baptized.” Here the sheep image breaks down a little, for each of us can be shepherd as well as sheep. Each of us is called to be a shepherd in some way, if only for one other person.

Our Lord was moved at the sight of the crowds aching for God’s touch. Well, the crowds are still forming, so let us all join together, priests, religious, and all the baptized, in the work that must be done, for we are all called to bring Christ to the world. The nineteenth-century American orator and agnostic Robert Green Ingersoll said that love is the only priest. If this is true, then let us bring all the love we have to our neighbors, giving without cost. As a nation of priests and holy people, a bountiful harvest is our highest calling.

KEEPING FAITH FIRST FAMILY FUN

Matthew 9:36-10:8

F C A X C P D C Y W R T G
S J P U G I S T P Q E S A
O H R L S R I A I E E O P
S E E E E R E R T H S C O
Y H A P O V Y X Y Y N T S
J S E H H D R I V E O U T
E L T E S E T S O L M O L
X U L J P D R G B X E H E
A M S K W T W D M Q D T S
E S N A E L C O V F M I T
K C A Q H V B K R A Z W R
G H X F H E A R T C J I B
Z I R H V N C O S Z T S I

Find these words from the Gospel passage.

APOSTLES	AUTHORITY	CLEANSE
CROWDS	CURE	DEMONS
DISEASE	DRIVE OUT	HEART
LEPERS	LOST	PITY
SHEEP	SHEPHERD	WITHOUT COST

Disciple’s Reflection & Questions of the Week

*Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
6/15/2008*

*Matthew 9:36-10:8
Faith-Sharing
Questions of the Week*



Our Lady of the Assumption

435 Berkeley Ave.

Claremont, CA

www.olaclaremont.org

Call to Prayer

We begin by calling upon God:

**In the Name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit, Amen.**

*We then pause for a moment to listen with
our hearts to this week's Gospel passage...*

The Word of God: *Matthew 9:36-10:8*

The Gospel according to Matthew

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."

The Gospel of the Lord

Gospel Glossary

apostle: "one who is sent" This is the only place this word is used in Matthew's Gospel. Calling them "apostles" instead of "disciples" emphasizes the "sending out" of the twelve.

"Do not go into pagan territory": The limits Jesus places on his apostles echo the limits of his own pre-resurrection ministry, which was centered around the Israelites.



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Faith Sharing

Questions of the Week

- What have I received "without cost" from God?
- What have I given to God's people "without cost"?
- How does my baptism make me a laborer in Christ's harvest and a minister of his compassion?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the face of divine compassion for us: *Lord have mercy!*

Christ Jesus, you shepherd your people with tenderness: *Christ have mercy!*

Lord Jesus, you send out laborers for the harvest: *Lord Have mercy!*

Almighty God, our hope and strength, without you we falter. Help us to follow Christ and to live according to your will. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Amen.

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