

BRIDGES to the Good News

Living the Good News
PROPER 8 – A

Sunday Summary

Matthew 10:40-42

Today's readings focus on the rewards that come to those who undertake and who respond to the mission of disciples. Matthew here touches on a consistent theme of Jesus as "God with us" (1:23, 28:20) who hides himself in those whom we encounter (25:31-46).

As Jesus sends the disciples to continue his proclaiming and healing ministry, like every messenger they are invested with the power of the one who sent them. Christian disciples thus convey not only their message, but also the presence of Jesus and therefore of God. So people's response to these "prophets" and "little ones" is at the same time a response to Christ himself.

Weekly Reflection

This week's gospel presents us with a baffling paradox. After Jesus tells us that we must be able to sacrifice even the love of our parents and even the love of our beloved children for the sake

of God's kingdom, he immediately assures us that those who give as little as a cup of cold water to a disciple of Jesus will be rewarded. The latter teaching is the gospel we love; the first is the gospel we dread. Put God's kingdom before our family? All our instinct is to cherish and protect children, spouses and parents. What are we being called to do?

We are being called to die to ordinary human life. Perhaps we can see the call more clearly in the life of a Francis of Assisi. This rich young merchant's son, fastidious with his dress and person, heard the call in many vague ways until the day it became loud and clear for him in the sight of a leper swinging a bell, warning the healthy to stay away. Francis knew what cup of water was being asked. He leapt from his horse, drew near to his fear and embraced it—he kissed the leper.

So what are we being called to do? That which is hard or that which is easy? Well, to begin is easy. All you do is offer a cup of cold water, reach out with an unexpected kiss or open your door to a sister or brother in need.



Food for Thought

- ❖ What does it mean to you that our love for parents, spouses, children be subordinate to our love for Christ?

Food for Thought

- ❖ What has been the cost of discipleship to you? to those you love?

Bridges for Fridges

Recipe for Awareness



Begin with a moment of centering silence and quiet reflection, setting aside the concerns and agenda of the day.



1 We come to an awareness of God's presence in our family.

"Dear God, who is present with our family now, and at all times and in all ways..."

Continue with:

2 We express our gratitude for today's gifts from God.

*"Today I give thanks for..." or,
"Today, I am grateful for..."*

Pause again for another moment of centering silence and quiet reflection.

3 We come to an awareness of God's presence in our own experience.

*Silently contemplate the question:
"When have I acted from love?"*

*Silently contemplate the question:
"When have I acted from fear?"*

Based on your contemplation, create your intention to move forward as an expression of God's Love.

4 We plan and move forward with God.

"God, help me to manifest your presence today by..."

Invitations to Community

- Jesus promises that when we welcome one another, we welcome him. Who needs to feel welcome in our congregation? How do we show welcome to people of different cultures? Pray that our doors and hearts may open wider to all God's family.
- We are called also to welcome Jesus in our daily life. How do we encounter Jesus in our colleagues? our families? our friends? our neighbors? Pray that God will enable us to see each familiar face as the face of Jesus.

Suggestions for Families

Write the words, "Welcome, Jesus," in a vertical column down the left-hand side of a sheet of poster board. Ask family members to turn it into an acrostic by listing ways to welcome Jesus that begin with each letter of the phrase. For example, for the letter W in "Welcome," family members might write, "We open the door for Jesus."

Plan a dinner where you invite a guest to join you. Give each person in your family a role in preparing the meal, and discuss together ways in which each person will help to make the guest feel welcome.

Prayer Starter

Jesus, help me to follow
you this week...

