

Celebrating Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019...

Thursday, 3 October 2019

26th Week in Ordinary Time

Readings: Nehemiah 8:1-4a, 5-6, 7b-12; Lk 10:1-12

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The first reading from the Book Nehemiah gives an account of the important moments of the restoration of the Israelites after the Babylonian captivity. Ezra, the priest and scribe, reads the laws of Moses for the people and thus reminding them of their covenantal bond with Yahweh. This also enables them to reconcile and return to the Lord in a refreshed way. Are we also in an exile? We might also be far away from God due to many reasons. Nehemiah and Ezra inspire us to turn back to God from our own exiles.

Today's gospel reading is very significant and relevant for this month specially dedicated for Global Mission. Jesus "sent" out the Seventy Two for preparing the way or may be as part of His Messianic mission. Their mission is going to be dangerous and difficult. Hence Jesus warns them by saying that "I am sending as lambs in the middle of wolfs." It is not surprising to us that the more you are part of a "spiritual pursuit" the more you will be rejected, criticized and deserted. That is the reason why "the harvest is plenty but labourers are few." All human beings have a spiritual dimension of life which demands from within a positive response.

The "harvest" is the large number of people who have not received the privilege of knowing and thus loving Jesus, the Lord. All baptized members of the church are sent as labourers of the word of God. Evangelization is done primarily through an authentic life lived in tune with the Gospel and secondarily through the proclamation of the word of God. When one is authentic in his Christian life, he or she gives utmost priority and reliance to God and God only. This is the reason why Jesus instructs the Seventy Two not to "Take any purse, haversack and sandals." It might appear to be too rude and hard from the part of Jesus that he even denies the very essentials or basic needs of the followers while they are "sent" as missionaries. However, when one gives totally to the service of God, God will take care of them. God's people also will take care of them. When we are fully concerned about God and His Kingdom, God will take care of our needs, how little and even insignificant they may be. There four aspects of their being sent:

- a. They are sent as pairs - so that they will support each other and check on each other
- b. They are sent as lamb - so that they will be innocent and blameless before sinful and cruel people around them.
- c. They are sent as labourers - so that they will be hardworking and committed in the Garden, never lazy and lukewarm.
- d. They are sent with powers - so that they will not depend on their human power rather will have divine power. They will be able to do miraculous and supernatural things.

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