

*Celebrating Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019...*

## **Wednesday, 2 October 2019**

2 Thes 3:6-12; Lk 9:1- 6

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Today's gospel passage presents Jesus commissioning the apostles with a great mission. This is a wonderful passage for our reflection in the initial days of the celebration of the extra ordinary mission month October 2019 to search collectively the expectations and demands of Jesus, our master from us his disciples of the present age. A close meditative analysis of the Gospel text would expose the very purpose and nature of any missionary journey of the disciples of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God. We try to reflect the mission entrusted to the disciples against the back ground of the mission entrusted to Jesus the first missionary (as sent by God the father to redeem the humanity). Jesus has set the tone of his mission at the beginning of Luke's gospel, "The Spirit of the Lord is up on me, because He has anointed me to bring the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind and to let the oppressed go free" (Lk. 4:18).

Connecting the mission of Jesus entrusted by God the father and the mission of disciples entrusted by Jesus Himself makes it very clear that the mission is one and the same. And hence we realize that Jesus in fact offers a share of his mission to His beloved disciples. The beginning verses puts clearly the very purpose with which Jesus summons and commissions the disciples of all time. Proclaiming the Kingdom of God and healing the sick are the core of the mission of the disciples. To make us successful in His mission, Jesus anoints us with the power and authority over all demons as He anointed the first group of disciples. The sole capital of the missionaries is the anointing by the Lord, Himself. This obliges us to remain constantly in the incessant anointing poured over our soul by 'the anointed one,' Messiah and to be the carriers of His anointing. We are anointed to anoint our brethren with the oil of gladness. Pope Francis would remind us, "A good disciple can be recognized by the way his people are anointed."

Before sending them out for carrying the and transmitting the anointing of the joy of the Kingdom of God, Jesus calls for a radical option to suit themselves to His demands and expectations. Jesus asked them vehemently to 'take nothing.' This verse could be well articulated at the background of narration of Levitical priests in the book of Ezekiel. God the Lord reminds the prophet about the share of the priests. "This shall be their inheritance: I am their inheritance; and you shall give them no holding in Israel; I am their holding." (Ez. 44:28). There is a wonderful prayer of Moses: "Lord, if your presence does not follow, do not carry us up from here" (Exodus 33: 15). The command of Jesus to take nothing demands a total surrender and commitment for the cause of mission and a complete trust in the providence of God. The profound motto of our founder St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara "God's Will, always and everywhere" shall create a trend setting momentum to depend solely on the providence of God; and neither on

our merits nor on our credits. Any social activity devoid of divine connectivity can't be counted as an apostolate of Jesus Christ. II Vatican Council document *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests gives a very practical interpretation for today's gospel text. Priestly functions are proclaiming the Gospel, Performing the sacred functions, and gathering the family of God together. And hence any activity that does not aim at gospel proclamation, healing of the ailments and eradicating the evils in the society has a higher probability of tending to be mere "human inventions" rather than God's mission. May Jesus our Lord grant us the grace to be His missionaries and messengers who can become the carriers of His anointing of grace, truth, love, patience and justice!

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