

Celebrating Extraordinary Missionary Month October 2019...

Friday, 18 October 2019

Latin Readings: 2 Tim 4:10-17b; Lk 10:1-9

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Today, on the feast of the Evangelist Luke, the Gospel presents to us the sending out of seventy to proclaim the good news. By the word harvest, the evangelist wants to combine an agricultural observation with a statement about the apostolic mission. Every harvest is a feast and fruition of much labor and growth beginning with the sowing of seeds, the sprouting and finally, the reaping of fruits. The image of harvest used by Jesus is to indicate the coming of the kingdom of God on the earth. The number seventy is very significant here and it refers to the seventy gentile nations of the world listed in Gen 10. Thus, the men whom Jesus commissioned become the pioneers and precursors of the good news to the larger world. They are called to be the mouth of God (Lk 10,5-6).

Why did he send out them in pair? It seems that there is a synergy-a spiritual energy-released when two or more are participating in the ministry. And the testament of two would be more weighty than that of one and they had to bear witness Christ's words and works.

The Talmud prescribes that no one is to go on the temple mount with staff, shoes, scrip or money tied to him in the purse. The disciples of Christ are called to go out with the same spirit as they would go to the services of the temple avoiding all distractions. There is a great difference between the disciples of Jesus and the Pharisees. The Pharisees were not receiving any food offered them by the people because the food may not be "ritually pure." For this reason, they had always with them their purse to take care of their food and other expenses. But Jesus sends out his disciples breaking such superfluous traditions present among the Jews.

On this occasion of extraordinary month of mission, Jesus gives the same commission to us if we are his people. As he sent out the seventy, so he sends us out with the same authority and the same commission. Our Christian life is always a missionary journey. There is no Christian life without Christ's mission and vision. Jesus has empowered each one of us to proclaim his good news to the whole world and to be the carriers of his *Shalom*. Let's renew our missionary commitment and proclaim Him to the ends of the earth.

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