

June 27, 2010-05-05

www.sjti.ac.za/resources_homily.htm

First Reading: 1 Kings 19:16,19-21
Response: "**O Lord, it is you who are my portion**" (Ps. 15:5)
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 15:1,2,5,7-11
Second Reading: I Corinthians 15:1-11
Gospel: Luke 9:51-62

The Risen Lord fulfilled the will of his Father. By the power of the Holy Spirit, he wrought our salvation. He has served his Father and us faithfully. How do we follow and serve him? The disciple of Christ, does not do what he likes but seeks to do the will of God.

God tells his prophet, Elijah, "**Go to anoint Elisha son of Shaphat**" (I Kgs. 19:21). Elijah finds him and "**throws his cloak over him**" (I Kgs. 19), which is a call to follow him.

"**Elisha rose and he followed Elijah**" (I Kgs. 19: 21) and will succeed him as a prophet. Recognizing his new call from God, Elisha sacrifices all, forsaking family, farm and fortune. He resolutely follows Elijah and puts his complete trust in God.

Psalm 15 is one of complete trust in God, especially for the Levites, the only tribe in Israel that had no territory. Their only heritage was God and they place their trust in him. "**O Lord, it is you who are my portion**" (Ps.15:5).

Some consider Psalm 15 to be messianic, with a hint of the resurrection. "**You will not leave my soul among the dead, nor let your beloved know decay**" (Ps. 15:10); and signifies those who come to "**the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence**" (Ps. 15:11).

Trusting in God involves serving him with love through "**the guidance of the Spirit**" (Gal. 5:16). And says St. Paul, "**If you are led by the Spirit, no law can touch you**" (Gal.5:18). In other words, you act out of love (spiritual desire) and not from laws controlling the flesh.

St. Paul shows that divine discipleship means "**you were called to liberty**" (Gal.5:13), a freedom to love and serve. "**Serve one another, rather in works of love**" (Gal.5:13).

We see Christ's determination to carry out his mission, he "**resolutely took the road for Jerusalem**" (Lk.9:51) and he involves his disciples. He "**sent messengers ahead of him**" (Lk.9:51).

Gospel shows three persons in the call to discipleship. One volunteers to "**follow you wherever you go**" (Lk.9:57). Jesus said to another "**Follow me**" (Lk.9:59) but he had priorities at home. A third says he will follow but needs go first and say "**Good bye to my people**" (ibid.)

Jesus wants total commitment, courage and dedication, without counting the cost or hesitation. "**Once the hand is laid on the plough, no one who looks back is fit for the kingdom of God**" (Lk.9:62).

Scripture: Read Luke 9:51-62; and reflect upon the Lord we serve and cost of discipleship.

Liturgy: "**That my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.**"

Teaching: Discipleship spells being on a journey with Christ and resolute as he.

Witness: **As the Lord calls you, what is your response? How great is your commitment?**

FOR THE CHILDREN:

Bible: Read Gospel (Lk.9:51-62). Discuss Jesus' determination and our call to discipleship.

Worship: Discuss where and how we can offer up ourselves in the celebration of the Mass.

Doctrine: Explain what is meant by the sacrifice of Jesus and our sacrifice.

Witness: Say a commitment prayer in the lesson and promise of future commitments.

FOR TEENAGERS (Shared Christian Praxis)

Name the Present Action: *What do you think of discipleship and following Christ?*

Your Story and Vision: *What is your story of following the Lord and commitment?*

Church Story and Vision: *Give the Church's teaching on discipleship and dedication.*

Yours and Church's Vision: *How would you envisage yourself, with the Church, building the Kingdom of God?*

RCIA:

Following Christ is a journey. He resolutely took the road to Jerusalem. Can you resolutely follow? Ponder the cost of discipleship. Pray for the grace to take up the challenge.

LIFE EXPERIENCE:

I read of an old Indian who told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He called it a battle between two wolves inside us all. One is evil, it is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, greed, resentment, lies, false pride and ego. The other is good, it is joy, peace, love, hope, humility, kindness, generosity, truth, compassion and faith. The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?" The old man replied "The one you feed."

Speaking of two animals, reminds me of Aesop's fable about two animals fighting at a waterhole. When they saw the vultures patiently watching them, they stopped fighting.(i)

(i) **AESOP** "Fables of Aesop". Transl. by S.A. **Handford**. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, UK. 1971. p.21.

LITTLE ANGELINA:

Angelina heard me discussing a Zulu expression in the Gospel, 'Amabombo akhe ayebheke eJerusalema,' (Lk.9:53), literally meaning that Jesus was facing, pointing his nose towards Jerusalem i.e. purposely journeying in that direction. Later when Angelina was questioned where she was going, she politely told her parents that she was pointing her nose to her friend's house for a visit. Children will grow up. She will, to use Anne Bronte's expression, "quit the nibbled leaf and soar to the flower."(i)

(i) **BRONTE** Anne. "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall". Collector's Library. Brookcraft Ltd, Stroud, U.K. 2007. p.487.

IMPORTANT WORDS: *Elijah, Elisha, Jesus, Discipleship*

Elijah's name answers to who God is, i.e. 'God is Yahweh,' Yahweh (alone) is God. **Elisha's** name answers to what God does. It means 'God is Saviour,' He alone saves us. Last Sunday, Jesus asked his disciples, who he is? The response was that he is the Son of God and Messiah, our Saviour Anointed (Jesus Christ). Today we see his calling others to discipleship, "Akoulouthei moi," "Follow me" (Lk.9:59, vid. Mt.9:9; Mk.2:14; Jn.1:43, etc.). Another form is "Deute opiso mou" i.e. "Come after me," (Mt.4:18; Mk.1:17,). Interestingly, in the call to perfection, Jesus uses both forms: "Deuro akoulouthei moi (Mt.19:21), "Come follow me." The text in Hebrew reads י א ח ר י לך , *Lekh 'aharay*, reminiscent of God's לך י לך , *Lekh-lekha*, when he called Abram to leave everything, to journey and walk with Him.

N.B. Discipleship is also a shared experience as seen where *synakoulouthesai* is used, *Mark 5:37*, meaning 'to follow together'. Here, as on other important events, a number of apostles are together as witnesses of Jesus and so pass it on as an authority, a sign of collegiality. The apostolic walk is together as disciples of Christ.

Watchword: “**Follow me**” (Lk.9:59)

Hebrew: לך אחרי *Lekh 'ahari.*
Greek: Ακολουθει μοι *Akolouthei moi.*
Latin: **Sequere me.**
Portuguese: **Segue-me.**
Spanish: **Sigueme.**
French: **Suis-moi.**
German: **Folge mir nach!**
Afrikaans: **Volg my.**
Zulu: **Ngilandele.**
Xhosa: **Yiba ngumlandeli wam.**
Sotho: **Ntatele!**
Irish: **Lean mise.**