

## June 26, 2016 – 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

In today's Gospel, Jesus speaks of the severity and unconditional nature of Christian discipleship. Even family ties and filial obligations cannot distract one no matter how briefly from proclaiming the kingdom of God. Discipleship requires a wholehearted commitment to the Lord and a generous spirit of service toward his people. The demands are severe. Jesus says unambiguously: "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God".

The people of Jesus' time understood this agrarian imagery. The farmer has to keep his eyes fixed straight ahead, otherwise the neatly organized field required for planting would be turned into a chaotic nightmare at harvesting time. The demand sounds harsh, especially when Jesus says, "Let the dead bury their own dead". This is not disrespect for our deceased, but simply a realization that we must live without regret over the past. If we keep our eye on the present, then the fields of our lives will have the grace and freshness of newly plowed spring fields. Our lives will hold great promise for a rich harvest.

The road that Christians must walk is similar to the road Jesus himself journeyed, involving gross misunderstanding and rejection and requiring a great deal of internal strength and energy. To be a disciple requires total commitment on our part. The journey is final, its consequences ultimate. To be called does not require our perfection. The prophets of Israel, the fisher-men of Galilee, the tax collectors that Jesus called were certainly not summoned because of their qualifications or achievements. Paul says that Jesus calls "the foolish", so that the wise will be shamed. Our discipleship of Jesus must be much more than staying with him in Bethlehem, Nazareth, or atop Mount Tabor. It must also include being with him in Jerusalem, in Gethsemane, on Calvary.

There is no possibility of a lukewarm response; the Gospel requires all or nothing. The disciples speak the ultimate message of the Lord, "Say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you'" (Luke 10:9). As signs of victory over evil, the disciples have spectacular powers, demonstrating the awesome power of God. They are to rejoice, though not in the power of God active in them or even in the success of their message: joy comes from the promise of life that has been given to them.



We are today's disciples. Our mandate is the same: to speak by our words and deeds the love of our God, and most of all, to rejoice, because he has called us and gifted us with such abundant life.

[shortened from: <http://saltandlighttv.org/blog/category/rosicareflections>]

## NEWS

**Social Gathering** – Our next social gathering comes off next week, **July 3**. Stay behind after Mass for this get-together; and if possible, bring a dish to share! Help with set-up at church is welcome from 12:30 on.

**Childrens' Ministry** – We would like to offer our children's ministry on a **regular monthly basis** from now on. Each social gathering Sunday (thus, usually the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month) we will have a Mass for our families, where the children can spend time together in the sacristy during the liturgy of the word, learning in a playful way about our faith. Moms/ Dads are welcome to accompany little ones that might be too shy on their own ☺.

**Südstadtfest** – We are invited to join the German-speaking community of St. Michael, as well as the other church communities and social clubs of this part of the city for the annual "Südstadtfest" on **July 9 and 10** at Markusplatz, 3 min walk from St. Michael. An ICCH group will meet after Mass on July 10 to go there together. Also, lists asking for volunteers are waiting for your inscription! (*more info: bulletin board/ announcements*)