

JANUARY 17, 2021
Sunday of the 2nd Week in OT
John 1: 35-42

“HERE I AM, LORD.”

“One day, St. Francis of Assisi invited one of the young friars to join him on a trip into town to preach. The young friar was so honored at receiving such an invitation from St. Francis that he quickly accepted. They paused beneath a tree and Francis stooped to return a young bird to its nest. They went on and stopped in a field crowded with reapers and Francis bent his back to help load the hay onto a cart. From there they went to the town square where Francis lifted a bucket of water from the well for an old woman and carried it home for her. All day long he and St. Francis walked through the streets and byways, alleys, and suburbs, and they rubbed shoulders with hundreds of people. Each time they stopped, the young friar was sure that St. Francis would stop and preach. But no words of great truth or wise discourse issued from the saint’s mouth. Finally, they went into the Church, but Francis only knelt silently to pray. At the end of the day, the two headed back home. Not once had St. Francis addressed a crowd, nor had he talked to anyone about the Gospel. The young monk was greatly disappointed, and he said to St. Francis, “I thought we were going into town to preach?” St. Francis responded, “My son, we have preached. We were preaching while we were walking and in everything we did. We were seen by many and our behavior was closely watched. It’s of no use to walk anywhere to preach unless we preach everywhere as we walk! Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words only if necessary.”¹

In our gospel for today, the Lord is teaching us the way how to ‘preach’ to people, that is by example. The gospel tells us when two disciples of John the Baptist was following Him, He ask: “What are you looking for? They said to him, ‘Rabbi’ (which translated means Teacher), ‘where are you staying?’ He said to them, ‘Come and see.’

¹ <http://frtonyshomilies.com>

They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.”² Jesus Christ wanted them not just to hear the answer but experience it with Him. He showed them what is like to be a disciple not only by words but by example. The Lord therefore is telling us: preach by example like what St. Francis showed to the young monk.

Another lesson that we can get from our gospel is to share, spread and propagate God’s goodness and infinite love. We are called to tell it to others and invite and bring them to Jesus so that they, too may experience who God is. This is what Andrew did to Simon: “He first found his brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah.’ He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas’ (which is translated Peter)”³

My brothers and sisters, let us ask ourselves: how do we preach the gospel in our lives? Can other people see in us that we are disciples of Jesus? Are we good examples for others? Do we share, invite, and bring other people to Jesus? My brothers and sisters, we are all called to be disciples of Jesus. We need to preach the gospel everyday, in good time or in bad, in any circumstances. We must not be discouraged to bring others, your husband, your wife, your children, your friends to God. Show them that God is good by being good and kind to them. Let them know that God loves them wholeheartedly because you too love them totally, without boundaries or inhibitions. By your good example, you are preaching.

Let this be our prayer: “Lord Jesus, help me to be a good example for others by living out Your Word of Life. May I invite, share, and bring others to You to show how good You are. May I always listen and follow You throughout my life. Like Samuel in our First Reading and in our Responsorial Psalm, may I also say: “Here I am, Lord, I come to do your will. Speak, for your servant is listening. Amen.”

² John 1: 38-39 NRSV Catholic Bible Press USA

³ John 1: 41-42 NRSV Catholic Bible Press USA