

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Year C

Isaiah 66:10-14c

Psalms 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20

Galatians 6:14-18

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

Gathering

(An unlit candle, a Bible open to this week's gospel and some pictures of people in need from around the world are arranged on a cloth-covered table in the gathering place.)

Prayer

(The candle is lit and the leader invites members to dwell in attention to the presence of God. After a time of quiet, the leader prays on behalf of all as follows.)

Changes

Leader: Dear God, Be with me, as I walk your paths in places I sometimes do not want to go. Be with me as I say goodbye to those I want to stay with. Be with me as I leave behind gifts so newly given and hardly seen. Be with me as I try, sometimes sadly, to walk your way.

All: Amen.

Edwina Gateley, © 2014. *There Was No Path So I Trod One.*

HEARING THE LORD'S GOSPEL

(The scriptures are proclaimed aloud with a pause after each reading. Following a pause after the proclamation of the gospel, the leader invites members to name a word or phrase from the gospel that stays with them, but without any additional comment. Some may repeat what another has already said.)

When this naming is complete, the leader passes out copies of the scriptures of the week as needed. Pausing between them, the leader then poses these two questions: “What draws you to this gospel?” “Where do you resist this gospel?” The community pauses for a time of silent reflection. After about a minute, the leader invites members to consider the Reflection and Questions for the week. After a time for silent reflection, the leader invites members to re-arrange themselves in groups of three or four for sharing. The small groups move off so as not to intrude on one another.)

Reflection

This week’s gospel about the sending of the seventy-two has me recalling the time I was sitting on a JetBlue flight to Haiti. As we prepared to take off, I questioned “Why am I going?” For years I had resisted the thought of even traveling to Haiti. Even when friends shared with me their experiences there, I did not believe I was being asked by God to go and so I didn’t. And then I did.

Luke’s gospel makes me wonder now, had I heard these instructions from Jesus would I have been sitting there as the pilot said: “Prepare for take-off.” I am sure it was comforting for the disciples to know they were not traveling alone and that Jesus would eventually join them in the town. I wasn’t traveling alone and I did know one person in Haiti, and yet I can relate to feeling like *a lamb among wolves*.

I knew I was not well prepared for this trip. I would be totally dependent on those who would meet me, feed and shelter me. I was being brought to a place that was way outside of my comfort zone. I had no clue as to whether or not I could handle what I was going to see or be asked to do. I was to be there for only five days and knew there was little I could do to make a great difference in such a short period of time. Why was I going?

I believe now that I was sent, but not to do any great mission. There is much to do in Haiti and five days would not be enough time. Through prayer and reflection I have come to understand it was not about me doing any great thing. I believe it was for me to see the work of God with new eyes, to trust my own powerlessness and be dependent knowing that I would be taken care of. The trip was about relationship; mine with God and with those I would meet in Haiti.

I went thinking that based on economics, education and where I lived, I had more power than those I was going to serve. I returned knowing that

the power I thought I had was not as powerful as being in right relationship with God and those around me. God *sends* us in many ways.

Questions for Reflection and Conversation

- ◆ Share a time when you were asked to go somewhere or do something you believed you were not prepared to handle.
- ◆ What is your experience of being *sent* by God for some purpose – whether you understood that or not?
- ◆ How able are you to let yourself be dependent on others?
- ◆ Reflect on what it means to you to be powerful and powerless in the midst of doing God’s work?

HEARING THE GOSPEL’S LORD

(After about fifteen minutes of sharing in threes/fours, the leader re-gathers the community. Once back together, members pause for a moment. The leader then poses these questions: “What do you want to hold on to for yourself from this session?” “How are you/we being called to live in response to God’s word?” After a pause, the leader invites the community to a time of conversation. When this sharing is complete, the community moves to a time of prayer.)

Response in Action Suggestions

- ◆ Set aside ten minutes each day this week for reflection and prayer with this week’s gospel. Listen for where the Lord is sending you to announce the kingdom of God.
- ◆ Bring help and hope to the people of Haiti through corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Support the work of the church through the Haitian Health Foundation (www.haitianhealthfoundation.org).
- ◆ The Lord needs both lay, religious and priest *laborers for his harvest*. Contact your diocesan Office for Vocations for the name of a seminarian to whom you may write to offer your prayers in his time of discernment.

Prayer

(After a brief pause, the gospel or a portion of it, either of the other readings

as appropriate or the responsorial psalm are proclaimed. The idea is to select a text that lends itself to inviting members to the time of silent prayer that follows. Following the proclamation, the leader poses these questions to the members: **“What does Christ in his Spirit say to you now?”** **“What do you say to him in response?”** The community pauses for a full five minutes of prayerful attention to God. A brief instrumental selection may be played during part of this time. After this time of silence, the leader invites members simply to mention a word or two, or a brief expression that captures what they hear Christ saying to them personally. The community receives this without additional comment.

Following this sharing, the prayer continues as follows:

Leader: We turn to You, God who gives grace in unexpected places and You teach us to look with expectation all around. As we learn to see through your eyes, we are less and less disappointed, and more and more grateful that Your grace in us continues to prevail. For this we thank You and praise You.

All: Amen.

WomanWitness. Miriam Therese Winter.
Crossroad New York

(Members stand, join hands and pray the Lord's Prayer.)

The session concludes with the exchange of a sign of peace.)

