

GOSPEL

Matthew 10:37-42

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it.

'Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me.

'Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will have a prophet's reward; and anyone who welcomes a holy man because he is a holy man will have a holy man's reward.

'If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.'

HOMILY OF POPE ST JOHN PAUL II

(TRANSLATED FROM ITALIAN, EXCERPT)

30 June 1996

"You too, consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive for God, in Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:11)

Dear brothers and sisters, every disciple is called to be an apostle of the Gospel, by virtue of baptism, which the apostle Paul told us about in his Letter to the Romans. Christ "lost his life" and received it renewed by the Father, to pour it out, in the Holy Spirit, on all who believe in him. His "baptism" into death (cf. Lk 12:50) is the beginning of our baptism, his resurrection, the principle for us of a journey of new life, centered on the relationship with him, which gives fullness of meaning and value to every other human bond.

Dear friends, let us turn our gaze to the Virgin Mary: She was "baptized" in the paschal mystery of Christ from the first moment of her conception: this is why she is the Immaculate Conception. Our invocation goes to her, so that she may obtain for us to sing the mercy of the Lord at all times.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What stood out to you from the Gospel or Reflection/ Homily?



Head: What does it mean to you to be an "apostle of the Gospel"?



Heart: Why is it difficult to "prefer" Jesus over everyone and everything else?



Hands: Who do you have a difficult time "welcoming" and what do you do to overcome these challenges?

PRAYER

Spend some time in prayer with one another:

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/ describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. "Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray")
3. Offer prayers of thanks and praise to God.
4. Pray for each others' prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps praying the 'Glory Be'.