

GOSPEL MESSAGE

July 7, 2024

LECTIONARY 14

Sent Out

In today's gospel reading, Jesus sends the disciples out on their own (in pairs, but without him) to spread his message, and he gives them a packing list: no food, no bag, no money, no extra clothes—only the love and power of Christ, and the good will of the people they would encounter to support them. The disciples must have felt woefully unprepared. And yet Jesus sent them anyway.

As Christians, we may feel unprepared for our journeys. We know that the Lord has sent us out into a broken world to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, but . . . *How do we do that? What do we say? What if people don't want to hear the message? Isn't it impolite to discuss religion?* Surely the disciples shared those concerns. But they went anyway, trusting Jesus. And in trusting Jesus, they found that his message of repentance and salvation was well received. "They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them."

Perhaps this story can serve as inspiration in our own vocations. Although we may not know how to tell others about the love we've found in Jesus, we know that Jesus is supporting us in our meager efforts. We may fear rejection, but Jesus tells us to shake the dust from our feet and carry on. If we worry that we won't get it right, we can remember that the word of God does not return empty. In your baptism, Jesus has called you into his family. In holy communion, he nourishes you for the journey. Throughout your life, he gives you a story to tell others, and the power to share his good news. Take courage, Christian, and go forth in his name. He's got your back!

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