

Go Home to Your Friends

WHAT WE FOUND

- A town found a man clothed and in his right mind, and asked the healer to leave. Some of the people we pray for are inside arrangements where a real change would cost other people something.
- The healed man asked one thing: that he might be with Jesus. In St. Mark's Greek it is the same construction used in Mark 3:14, singular instead of plural, where the Twelve were appointed to be with him. He asked for exactly what they were given.
- And Jesus refused him. Not to give him something smaller, but something harder: go home to your friends and tell them what the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you.
- He was told to say what the Lord had done for him and the mercy shown him: the before and after of his own life. And he went and proclaimed it in Gentile territory, and everyone marveled.
- Jesus said "the Lord." The man said "Jesus." St. Mark records the change and says nothing about it.
- The seventy were sent ahead of Christ into places he was already coming to. You are not carrying him into a place his grace has not preceded you.
- The first command in the sending is not go. It is pray for more laborers.
- Even to a town that refuses, the last word they are told to say is still the announcement: know this, that the kingdom of God has come near. Verse 12 then follows with a warning of judgment.
- They came back rejoicing at their results, and he redirected them: rejoice instead that your names are written in heaven.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | The Second Vatican Council on where the laity are sent

The Council taught that the laity live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very fabric of their existence is woven, that they are called there by God, and that by exercising their own proper function, led by the spirit of the Gospel, they work for the sanctification of the world from within, like leaven.

From within. The Council is describing the distinctive secular character of the lay vocation: they are called in the ordinary circumstances where they already live. It does not thereby exclude other legitimate forms of lay apostolate. That is Mark 5:19 in conciliar language.

Second Vatican Council, Lumen Gentium 31 (1964).

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | Pope Francis on how much training this requires

Pope Francis wrote that every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus, and that we should no longer speak of ourselves as disciples and missionaries as though these were two stages, but as missionary disciples.

And then the line that describes the man in the tombs exactly: anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim it. The man in Mark 5 had known Jesus for perhaps an hour.

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium 120 (2013).

VOICES OF THE CHURCH | St. John Henry Newman on a mission that is yours

God has created me, wrote St. John Henry Newman, to do him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which he has not committed to another. I have my mission.

He goes on to say that he may never know what it is in this life, but that he will be told it in the next, and that he is a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. This is for anyone who has spent twelve weeks quietly suspecting that the real work belongs to somebody else.

St. John Henry Newman, Meditations and Devotions, from the meditation on hope in God the Creator. Work-level citation.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

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Rung 12 of the ladder. Go home. Tell somebody who knew you before.

- Keep praying for the three by name, daily.
- Tell one person who knew you before what the Lord has done for you. Not doctrine, not an invitation, and not an argument. The before and the after.
- Keep it to what they can verify. They watched the first half; that is your credential.
- If they laugh, or change the subject, or bring up something you did at twenty, let it go and stay in the room. Do not defend yourself.
- **Next week is the last session.** Bring your three names, written out again from memory if you have lost the sealed page.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

"Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."

Mark 5:19

BEFORE NEXT SESSION

Read Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1:1-11, and John 20:19-23 before we meet. All three are short. Next week is our last session, so bring your three names, written out again from memory if you have lost the sealed page.

CATECHISM REFERENCES

- **CCC 851.** The source of missionary zeal is God's love for all people.
- **CCC 863.** The whole Church is apostolic, and every member shares in her mission.
- **CCC 899.** Lay initiative is necessary, and the laity are on the front lines of the Church's life.
- **CCC 900.** The laity have the obligation and the right to work so that the message of salvation is known and accepted.
- **CCC 1816.** The disciple must keep the faith, live on it, profess it, bear witness to it, and spread it.