

**Ok...here we are...believe it or not...we are half way through summer and, to be honest, for me...it feels like we haven't even started summer with all the rain and cool weather that we have had!**

**Be that as it may, it is going to be very soon now when we will start to hear of back to school sales...**

**Have you ever sent a child off to college?**

**Oh my goodness...It must be Bed, Bath and Beyond's favorite time of year!**

**The stuff our kids "need" to go to college!**

**Bedding, chairs, clothes, electronics, room decor, clothes, electronics, towels and toiletries and more clothes and more electronics...**

**How we send our kids off is quite the opposite to how Jesus sends his Apostles out...**

**He sends them out with no money, no food...nothing! Even just one tunic:**

**remember, that's the only piece of clothing they would be wearing!**

**why in the world would he do that?**

**Well, a lot has been written about trusting in the providence of God and the generosity of people...ok, that's good**

**and with so few possessions you are sometimes actually safer from those who would want to rob you, because you have nothing to take! not bad either...**

**With so few provisions, you would be more open to people's generosity and less inclined to refuse what you might not normally choose....another good point!**

**So, there are many good lessons from being sent out so simply....**

**But today I would like to reflect upon the fact that Jesus sent 12 very ordinary men**

to do very extraordinary things...

Now, let me acknowledge upfront that according to the Bible,  
the Apostles were indeed 12 men...

But were there women in his group...absolutely!

Mary of Magdalene has been called by many popes the apostle to the Apostles...

She was a close companion of Jesus and after his death, a prominent leader...

And she wasn't the only one....

there were many women among Jesus' disciples..

who else would have cooked the Last Supper???

So while the Bible may say only men were among the 12,  
we know that Jesus and Paul were not quite as narrow minded as the evangelists  
and later Church authorities.

But what we can all agree upon is how ordinary the people were  
who followed Jesus in his life time...they were shopkeepers and fishermen....  
they were wives and daughters, sons and husbands.

We do know that most of the people who were attracted to Jesus were not the rich and the  
famous, although there were of few of them too,  
but they were the poor and the neglected,  
the left out and the oppressed...  
most of them were the nobodies of society...

And Jesus sent them out to heal and preach...to anoint with oil and  
to invite everyone to turn their lives around and  
receive the Good News that the Reign of Heaven on Earth had begun!  
Wow! Imagine that! Here you are following Jesus, listening to him,  
trying to understand all that he is saying which sounds so beautiful and hopeful  
but also sounds so unreal and not your ordinary way of living and loving...

And now: he says, “Hey you....Yeah, you.... go! Get out of here...spread the word...  
Heal the sick, proclaim the Good News.....do it now.  
And oh...by the way....Don’t take anything with you....just trust me.

Mmm...has anyone heard that line before: just trust me???  
I would be willing to bet when he told the 12 to head out,  
they probably had their objections...I’m not ready!  
I can’t do this! Really, Jesus, it’s your job!  
I wonder if anyone refused to go???

And now he says to us...it’s your turn...  
Today, this day, Jesus sends us out to proclaim the Good News that the Reign  
of Heaven on Earth is here and now...

Today, this day, Jesus says to us:  
go on, get out there, the chapel is sweet, find your nourishment there...but remember:  
it’s not the end point ...

Today, this day Jesus says to us go on...get out there and  
heal the sick ....comfort the lonely...

Will we perform miracles?...well, that remains to be seen...

I know that I have personally not cured anyone of leprosy...  
but I think I’m not being arrogant to say, that I’ve been able  
to offer a bit of comfort to a lonely person or two  
and I know for a fact that I have shared a peanut butter and jelly sandwich  
with someone who was hungry...

Each of us, all of us are invited to this amazing and challenging adventure!

When I first got involved in ministry...I didn’t think I was qualified  
or prepared or ‘good’ enough...

**But none of that really matters...**

**oh sure, having a degree is helpful and valuable for certain things,  
but to offer the compassion, mercy, forgiveness and love of God,  
one does not need a degree...**

**All of us already have all that we need to be compassionate, merciful  
forgiving and loving**

**All of us already have the presence of the Holy One who flowing through us...  
reaching out to every nook and cranny in the cosmos.**

**Each of us are created as particularities of the Divine...**

**each of us, at our core, is the Holy one...**

**Each of us needs to let God out, to allow God energy and grace to flow...**

**Each of us needs to make God's love visible and manifest in and through our lives...  
that is what the Reign of Heaven on Earth is all about...**

**Today this Day, Jesus says to us: Ok folks...get going...travel simply, live lightly,  
don't take or acquire a lot of stuff or baggage...**

**you don't even have to change jobs**

**or leave the family! j**

**ust share the Good news: that Love is here to stay.**

**Nothing more is required...**

**And Of course, the only question that remains is: do we go? Amen.**