

October 22, 2023

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Is 45:1, 4-6 | 1 Thes 1:1-5b | Mt 22:15-21

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

It strikes me that our readings today are about “belonging.” It may seem like a simple concept, but in practice its meaning and ramifications run deep. Picture a young child coming home after a day at school or child care: He or she may even audibly let out a sigh of relief at the familiar surroundings, the presence of Mom and/or Dad, and all that they hold dear. Is it so different for us? We are God’s, we belong to him. In the first reading God tells Cyrus, “I have called you by your name.” And Jesus says to repay “to God what belongs to God.” How do we do that? We, who have been called by name by virtue of our baptism, do this by putting God first in our lives. By loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind. And by giving him not the leftovers, but the first fruits of our talents, our treasure, and our time. Spend some time in prayer with God today and listen to the words he writes upon your heart.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

We have been chosen by God to spread his Good News in the world. We are his witnesses. Sound intimidating? I took comfort in the words from Saint Paul in the second reading: “For our gospel did not come to you in word alone, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with much conviction.” Is it always a “piece of cake” to be Christ’s disciples in the world helping to build his kingdom here on earth? No, certainly not. But the knowledge that we are beloved and valuable in the sight of God, coupled with the power and strength of the Holy Spirit, fortifies us for the task. Are we up to the task? Yes. We belong to God now and forever. Let us strive to act like a child of God in all things, and deepen our reliance on the Holy Spirit when things get tough.

WITNESS Today’s Gospel acclamation, from Philippians, says: “Shine like lights in the world as you hold on to the word of life.” There is so much darkness in the world. Make an effort to be the “light” in someone’s life this week, whether it be a spouse, a child, a parent, or a co-worker.

“I HAVE
CALLED
YOU BY
YOUR
NAME.”

(IS 45:4)