**Morning Praise @ Home 7th July 2024**

**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession** Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and**

**repent.** **Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us**

**from our sin.** **Renew a right spirit within us** **and restore us to the joy of your salvation,** **through**

**Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen** cf Psalm 51

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### Bible Reading Mark 6: 1 – 13

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**Reflection from John**

What does K.I.S.S. stand for?

The best wisdom to live by is not to make things more complicated than they need be says author Robert Fulghum. Robert offers some everyday guidelines for life which while not distinctively Christian have a lot to offer:

*Share everything. Play fair. Put things back where you found them. Take a nap every afternoon. And when you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.*

So when Jesus sent his followers on their first outing as disciples he gave then some clear instructions on Mark 6:7-13: Here are four of them:

1. Don’t Be a Christian Alone
2. Remember that Jesus Is the Boss
3. Travel Light
4. Don’t Get Discouraged When You Fail

**Insight 1 – Don’t Be a Christian Alone**

Jesus has identified his twelve apostles, and now he is getting ready to send them out on a mission. And the first thing that he does is pair them up. Kind of like in Kindergarten, or on a school field trip, right? Or like Robert Fulghum’s idea “Hold hands and stick together.” Jesus teaches us something similar.

He sends them out in twos. Stick together. Don’t try to be a Christian alone.

Throughout Jesus’ ministry, when he calls disciples, the first thing he does is make us part of a community called the church. He calls us into this community because he knows that it is too hard to be a Christian alone. We need each other.

We truly need each other, and we are better, as it has been said, together. Jesus gathered his disciples together, and he gathers us together, too. And even when he sends us back out into the world, he pairs us up first.

Being a follower of Jesus is too hard to go it alone. We need his help and presence. But we need each other’s help, too. Is that how it is in our Church family?

**Insight 2 – Remember that Jesus Is the Boss**

In the next verse of this Reading, we find our second insight. To the apostles, we read, “*Jesus gave them authority over the unclean spirits*.” Which means that when we go into the world, we go because Jesus has given us the authority to do so. Jesus is the boss.

As he says in the Great Commission in Matthew’s Gospel: *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations …” Matt 28:18-19*

We go in confidence because we are following the Lord of The Church. Jesus has given us the authority which is only his to give. He’s the boss yet shares his mission with each of us.

In daily life and work, at home and in the community - we are his ambassadors. We have the authority to go in his name. That is the mission of the church: To do what he has commanded, in his name, with the trust and confidence that we are doing what the boss wants.

**Insight 3 – Travel Light**

The third lesson Jesus give us is this one: “*He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics.*”

In other words, we are supposed to travel light and not make lives more complicated than is necessary. Why?

Travelling light is an approach to life as a Christian which does not want to get too complicated and too burdened with complex requirements that get in the way of serving the Lord as the priority that shapes our lives.

**Insight 4 – Don’t Get Discouraged when things don’t always work out**

This is found in verses 10 and 11. He said to the twelve, “*Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.*”

We live for Christ with a caution: Not everyone will accept us, or our message, with open arms. There will be some that will refuse to hear us, for whatever reason. All we can do with them is entrust them to God and move on.

It is not our responsibility to successfully bring God’s kingdom to our world. As if we could! It is our task to enter a community, do as Jesus asks, and if we are not welcomed there, to shake the dust off our feet and move on.

So, what’s the simple lesson here? Don’t get discouraged when we fail. If the twelve apostles were told that they would sometimes fail, then we should expect to fail, too. But I like to think of the word “fail” as an acronym which stands for “Faith Active In Love.” When our faith is active in love, then we are serving our Lord. And when we seem to be failing, we shouldn’t get discouraged. Failure in the eyes of the world might just be overwhelming success in the eyes of God. Doesn’t the cross prove that?

It’s not always easy to live as followers of Jesus in this world. That’s why I suggest that we remember these basic lessons:

* Don’t try to be a Christian alone.
* Remember that Jesus is the boss, thankfully.
* Travel light, trusting that Jesus has given us everything we need to accomplish his mission.
* Don’t get discouraged when we fail.

Four things we can do to get back to the basics and live by. And my prayer is that we live these lessons faithfully, until the boss, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, returns and invites us to rest. **Amen**

**Affirmation of faith**

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Prayers of intercession**

Everlasting God, we make our prayers now for all people, everywhere, both close to us and far away.

Almighty and merciful God, whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own; look with mercy on those who today are fleeing from danger, homeless and hungry.

Bless those who work to bring them relief and inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts.

We pray for the leaders of the world carrying responsibilities for the lives of their people.

We especially pray for those who have been newly elected to serve as Members of Parliament in this country that they carry out their duties for the sake of the people they serve.

We ask you to strengthen all preachers and teachers in your church, especially those forced to lead worship in places of danger with risk of persecution for their faith. Protect them as they seek to glorify your name. We pray for our Diocese and our Bishops, Mark, Julie and Sam and for our ministry team here. We pray that they will be strengthened and protected by the Holy Spirit in all they do and say.

We pray for students and teachers in the last weeks of another school year. We pray for our young people whether in academics, sports, arts or trades who are seeking success. We pray especially for those about to leave school and move onto the next stage in their lives and for those for whom what happens next depends on exam results.

Lord, your love reaches beyond the grave. At the end of our days on earth be with us and with those we love.  We pray now for the family and friends of those who have recently died and those bereaved by their passing.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

***Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come,******Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen***

**Closing prayer**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be, that you may live and work to his praise and glory, and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us and remain with us always. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen**