

# 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – June 27/28, 2020 – Reflection

"Jesus summoned His twelve disciples ... (and) these twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions ... as you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

(From Chapter 10 in the Gospel of St. Matthew)

Have you ever volunteered for a job or a mission that was outside your comfort zone, something that would be hard, maybe even dangerous? In the bible there is the story of the kings of ancient Israel. All Israel under King Saul was quaking in fear before the might of the Philistine army who would soon overpower the forces of the king and defeat and enslave the Jews. The Philistines looked like a race of giants and one of their great warriors and champions, Goliath, stepped out of the ranks and approached the lines of Israel's armies. He called them out, taunted them, shouted that they were all cowards. He dared them to send one warrior to fight him man-to-man. The winner would win the battle for the whole army; the loser would sacrifice his people to serve the victor's people and gods.

Goliath had scorned the bravery of the Israelite forces ... and ... he was right. No one from Saul's armies dared answer the challenge, no one that is except the shepherd boy who would be king. David without sword or armor, went to meet the giant warrior with only a couple of stones and a sling ... but God was with him. The shepherd, as he would in protecting the sheep from the wolf, slung a small rock with deadly

precision toward Goliath. The rock embedded in the forehead of the giant bringing him down. David used the warrior's own sword to finish him off and brought the Philistine's head to King Saul. Thus Israel won the battle when an unlikely hero heard God's call and answered.

From the waters of Baptism, in the anointing of Confirmation, in the sign of the marriage vows, to the last words of every Eucharist celebrated ... "Go, you are sent," ... Jesus has called you to be His disciple, to stand up for the right and not settle for the convenient. He has called you to wear your faith proudly like a badge of honor and not hide its light under a bushel basket. Jesus has called you to get involved in His mission to serve the poor, welcome the outcast, feed the hungry, seek out the lost. He has told you that the work will be hard, that you'll be opposed even by your own families, your own friends.

Just as in our day, when the armed forces look for a few good people; just as in these days of pandemic, when hospitals and clinics and nursing homes look for dedicated caregivers who put service before self; just as visionaries moving for a more just society look for people to get involved in the march for justice, so Jesus is looking for you to not be lukewarm but to be passionate in living out your faith in worship, in right living, in service to the least of your brothers and sisters.

The Commander has sounded the call. The battle for good over evil is joined. Who will answer the Lord's call? You? You? You?