

## **Joining the Journey**

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

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Fr. Tony Davis

We all have to admit that our faith becomes dry. Sometimes, we are the cause of this dryness (i.e. laziness) and other times we aren't the cause (i.e. circumstances beyond our control). Regardless, we are most at risk to become stuck in these dry spells whenever we are too comfortable with where we are. In other words, whenever we stop for too long in one place because it is familiar to us.

Jesus in our Gospel today is all about a journey. Jesus never stood still for long. The phrase used by *Luke* speaking of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem was that he was 'resolutely determined.' Jesus had such a strong drive and intention to keep moving ahead towards his destination. There were moments for rest, but they were very brief. Every place, like the Samaritan village, was only a stepping stone to the next place. He had no permanent home, for as we heard him say, "foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head."

As Jesus and his friends were on this journey, more and more people were invited to join in. Some of them, while having the desire to follow, came up with something they needed to do first before joining the group. One of them wanted to bury his father and another say goodbye to his family. These certainly aren't bad things, but they are when the group is moving on. As a result, some potential followers were left behind.

Just as Jesus called these people to follow him on his journey, so too, Jesus continues to call us, the church, to move ahead with him today. As the church, a great temptation for us is to miss out on this journey with

him because we may want to go backward and live in the past. Whether our understanding of the ideal time in the Church's history was the early centuries, the Middle Ages, or even the 20th century, all those times are gone. Jesus was certainly there, but has already passed by through them. The invitation is to follow Jesus today. We do so by facing the concrete reality that is before us, even if it makes us uncomfortable.

Warning us against making too permanent a home along the way, the Franciscan priest Richard Rohr says, "the familiar and the habitual are so falsely reassuring, and most of us make our homes there permanently. The new is always by definition unfamiliar and untested, so God, life, destiny, suffering have to give us a push- usually a big one- or we will not go. Someone has to make clear to us that homes are not meant to be lived in- but only to be moved out from." (*Falling Upward*, xvii)

*Faith is an ongoing journey that prevents us from stopping for too long in our places of comfort.*

Have I stopped for too long at a place of comfort and familiarity?

As we continue with this mass, let us pray that God may push us out of our comfort zones so that we may rejoin Jesus and his church on the journey. May we be resolutely determined not to reach Jerusalem, but the New Jerusalem, which is heaven itself.