October 4, 2019

Scripture

Luke 10:13-16
Jesus said to them,
"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!
For if the mighty deeds done in your midst
had been done in Tyre and Sidon,
they would long ago have repented,
sitting in sackcloth and ashes.
But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon
at the judgment than for you.
And as for you, Capernaum, 'Will you be exalted to heaven?
You will go down to the netherworld.'
Whoever listens to you listens to me.
Whoever rejects you rejects me.
And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me."

Our Scripture Reflection

Yes, the disciples experienced rejection as Jesus had warned. In today’s Gospel, He describes
the fate of those who reject His messengers in shocking and embarrassing terms. Those towns
which were populated by God’s people, Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, should have
recognized, respected and accepted the messengers of God’s only Son, but instead they
refused to do so. They will be punished. However, the pagan cities of Tyre and Sidon, occupied
by the “heathen” of the day, did humbly accept and embrace His messengers. They will be
rewarded. Jesus then makes an incredible statement: To listen/accept His messenger, is to
listen/accept Him. But to reject His messenger, is to reject Him! What an honor, and at the same
time, a huge responsibility for the messenger. Are YOU up for the job???

Food for your Journey
Joan Chittister, a Benedictine nun ... explains that in ancient times, to be a Christian community meant to defy Roman imperialism, to stretch Judaism, to counter pagan values with Christian ones. Real discipleship meant the rejection of emperor worship, the foreswearing of animal sacrifice, the inclusion of Gentiles, the elimination of dietary laws, the acceptance of women and the supplanting of law with love, of nationalism with universalism.

Being disciples in the world today is no less challenging. For Chittister, it implies a commitment to be in our world what Jesus was for his: healer and prophet, voice and heart, call and sign of the God whose design for this world is justice and love. It infers, implies, and requires of us the confirming love Jesus had for everyone, everywhere — regardless of who might try to draw limits around the love of God.

Being a disciple means working to make life better for others, going beyond our lives to improve the lives of others. “To follow Jesus is to follow one who turns the world upside down,” says Chittister.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, To be Your disciple means that You love me and trust me more than I love and trust myself. You give me the honor and privilege of being Your Holy Presence to others. Make me humble and grateful, Lord. With the help of Your Grace, may I live a life worthy of Your incredible calling. Amen