



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK
Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time: SEPTEMBER 25-26, 2021

Dear Parishioners,

In order to move forward in the “Renew My Church” Initiative, we have to keep in mind **The Call to Holiness** is for all the baptized. A brief review follows:

The Call to Holiness – NEW TESTAMENT

There is more in a human life than biological, psychological, or even sociological frames of references. These modern perspectives are helpful, yet they do not reveal enough. They tend to fit life into a certain frame of reference which can dull or limit it. This perspective can become the view that the lay leader adopts and consequentially passes on to their individual ministries. The Second Vatican Council responded to these perspectives by seeking to renew the call to holiness rooted in the discipleship of Christ Jesus. “By this holiness a more human way of life is promoted even in this earthly society.”^{i/} The theology, which will illuminate the situation, will first focus on the foundation of the call to holiness and discipleship, as found in the New Testament.

The disciple (Mathetes) in secular Greek means “one who learns.” The disciple was bound to Jesus in order to “learn,” not only academically, but a way of life in community. The New Testament refers to five special characteristics of discipleship in relation to Jesus. First, the disciples of Jesus did not choose the master, rather, the master chose and called the disciples (Mk 1:17; 2:14 and Mk 3:13-14). Second, Jesus’ call was not restricted, the “tax collectors and sinners” (Mk 2:15) and women (Lk 8:2) also accompanied him as disciples. Third, Jesus’ call to discipleship demands radical conversion (Mk 10:21, Lk 9:57-62, Mk 2:14). Fourth, discipleship means sharing his ministry (Mk 6:7-13; Lk 10:2-12). Finally, discipleship means a willingness to love others with a sacrificial love (Lk 6:30, Mk 9:35). The ideal is expressed in John’s Gospel, where Jesus says: “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down his life for one’s friends” (Jn 15:12-13).



In summary, these elements of discipleship found in the New Testament shape every dimension of the lay leader’s life and ministry. These elements will lay the scriptural foundation necessary to understand the lay leaders called today before I explore very briefly how the helpful practical insights of John Cassian, Gregory the Great and Bernard of Clairvaux further our understanding of discipleship.

John Cassian, Gregory the Great and Bernard of Clairvaux have three common themes that I wish to explore to enhance our understanding of discipleship. The disciple of Jesus must be purpose-driven, spiritually aware of their life, and willing to grow spiritually with the help of others to build the Christian Community.

Sincerely,
Fr. Mike Meany

^{i/} Second Vatican Council, “Dogmatic Constitution on The Church,” in the Documents of Vatican II, ed. Walter M. Abbott, S.J. (New York: America Press, 1966), #40.