

Fifth Sunday After Pentecost –Revisiting Texts – Luke 9:51-62

A young man came to village church one day to preach his first sermon. He knew God, but he didn't know the Scriptures very well. He chose a very tough passage to preach from that summer's evening. It was from Luke 9:62, "Whoever puts his hand to the plough (plow, araro) and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God". The would-be preacher made a mess of it, but he did say one thing that some people remembered: "Those who walk in the light of God cast a shining light, and all those who walk within their shining light are inspired by it".

Let us look at this text again in view of its context and what it means.

Jesus had "set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). It was the beginning of the journey that would take him to Jerusalem and to the Cross. Even the people of the Samaritan village that Jesus and his entourage entered would not receive him "because his face was set towards Jerusalem". Such was his focus and intent that they stood in awe and even fear of him. He calls people on the road to follow him. One demurs, saying that he has to bury his father. The reply that he gets is startling: "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another says that he wants to follow Jesus, but first he needs to say farewell to those at home. This draws a tough response from Jesus that constitutes the real pronouncement of the passage: "Whoever puts his hand to the plough and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God".

The dead obviously cannot bury the dead. It was very proper to say farewell before leaving home, and indeed courtesy at that time demanded it. But such is the focus of Jesus that everything else gets caught up in its pressing and urgent perspective. Overstating a case has always been a way of pointing to something significant or trying to hide something. Surely something significant here!

The farming image of plowing with oxen is used here. The day's work with both hands on the plow is made to illustrate an everyday commitment to Christ and the Reign of God in the world. Jesus is telling his would-be followers that it is costly to follow him. The commitment is now, and for every day afterwards. As Richard Rohr says: "Salvation is only secondarily assuring you of an eternal life; it is first of all giving you that life now, and saying, 'If now, then also later', and that becomes your deep inner certitude!" Rohr also says, "If the (biblical) text is truly inspired, it will always be revealing 'the patterns that are always true', even and most especially here and now - in me, and not just back there in them." Salvation is not about a parking space in heaven, but the call to a passionate and lasting commitment to God in Christ, NOW! That entry right now into an incandescent faith prompts an "inner certitude" that looks for heaven and finds it. That inner certitude also leads us into surer interpretations of the text. We are 'there' and we participate. We read, but we also interact. We are inspired by an inspired text, but we also inspire others. This is the "conspiracy of God", connections made by faith and commitment and reinforced by the Holy Spirit. "Those who walk in the light of God cast a shining light, and all those who walk within their shining light are inspired by it".

**Next week's
readings:**

Isaiah 66:10-16;
Psalm 66;
Galatians 6:14-18;
Luke 10: 1-12, 16-20

THIS WEEK:

June 29, Tuesday.

- Bible Study, 10am

June 30, Wednesday: HOLIDAY.

July 1, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 9am, Chapel

July 3, Saturday.

- Vestry Planning Meeting, 9am

Your prayers are asked in our healing ministry for Beryl Tanner, Diana Croyston, JPeter, Ron Thoburn, Suzanne Jacobson, Ron Jacob, Ema Duhaylongsod, Cena Quiapos, Benjie Gonzales, Loy Solasco, Ted Whale, Bonnie SyCip, Fidelia Matthews, Jovel Llagas, Carlyn-Fern Manning, Johnny Manning Jr, Emerinciana Gatela, Amy Gonzales, Augusto Natividad, Janet Johnstone, Richard Kendall, Carrie Angus, Susan Dalmas, Reuben Longid, Avelina Collado, Gloria Domingo, Katsi Araneta, Sunny Cabanang, Jaqueline Acquiatan.

	Last Sunday	Year-to- date	Proportionate Budget	2010 Budget
Pledge	P104,116.66	P2,164,017.50	P1,875,000.00	P3,900,000.00
Loose Plate	P14,770.35	P460,467.10	P451,923.08	P940,000.00

The church's monthly **Sources & Uses** report is available for viewing in the Church Office. Please look for Maricel. For questions, feel free to email Edison at edisonyap@gmail.com