

TRINITY NEWS

January 14, 2024
Epiphany 2

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

A Reading from *The Cost of Discipleship*
by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The call of Jesus goes forth, and is at once followed by the response of obedience. The response of the disciples is an act of obedience, not a confession of faith in Jesus. But how could the call immediately evoke obedience?

The story of the call of the first disciples is a stumbling-block for the natural reason, and it is no wonder that frantic attempts have been made to separate the two events. By hook or by crook a bridge must be found between them. Something must have happened in between, some psychological or historical event. Thus we get stupid question: Surely they must have known Jesus before, and that previous acquaintance explains their readiness to hear the Master's call. Unfortunately Scripture is ruthlessly silent on this point, and in fact it regards the immediate sequence of call and response as a matter of crucial importance. It displays not the slightest interest in the psychological reasons for a person's religious decisions. And why? For the simple reason that the cause behind the immediate following of call by response is Jesus Christ himself. It is Jesus who calls, and because it is Jesus, they follow at once.

This encounter is a testimony to the absolute, direct, and unaccountable authority of Jesus. There is no need of any preliminaries, and no other consequence but obedience to the call. Because Jesus is the Christ, he has the authority to call and to demand obedience to his word. Jesus summons us to follow him not as a teacher or a pattern of the good life, but as the Christ, the Son of God. In this short episode Jesus Christ and his claim are proclaimed to the world. Not a word of praise is given to the disciple for his decision for Christ. We are not expected to contemplate the disciple, but only him who calls, and his absolute authority. There is no road to faith or discipleship, no other road—only obedience to the call of Jesus.

And what does Scripture inform us about the content of discipleship? Follow me, run along behind me! That is all. To follow in his steps is something which is void of all content. It gives us no intelligible programme for a way of life, no goal or ideal to strive
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after. It is not a cause which human calculation might deem worthy of devotion, even the devotion of ourselves. At the call the disciples leave everything that they have-but not because they think that they might be doing something worthwhile, but simply for the sake of the call. Otherwise they cannot follow in the steps of Jesus. The disciples burn their boats and go ahead. They are dragged out of their relative security into a life of absolute insecurity.

When we are called to follow Christ, we are summoned to an exclusive attachment to his person. The grace of his call bursts all the bonds of legalism. It is a gracious call, a gracious commandment. Christ calls; we are to follow.

[Source: Celebrating the Seasons]

SAINTS:

Charles Gore, Bishop & Founder, 17 January. Born in 1835, Gore became one of the most influential of Anglican theologians. He helped reconcile the Church to some aspects of biblical criticism and scientific discovery, yet was Catholic in his interpretation of the faith and sacraments. He was also concerned to bring Catholic principles to bear on social problems. As an Oxford don and then as a Canon of Westminster, he was renowned for his preaching. In the 1890s, he was the founder -- and first leader -- of the Community of the Resurrection, which in later years settled at Mirfield in Yorkshire. From 1902, he was successively bishop of Worcester, Birmingham and Oxford. He was much mourned at his death on this day in 1932.

Richard Rolle of Hampole, 20 January. Richard Rolle was born in about the year 1300 in Thornton in Yorkshire, where he first began to live the hermit life at the age of eighteen, after breaking off his education at the University of Oxford. After moving his hermitage to several other sites, he finally settled close to the Cistercian nuns at Hampole, where he undertook much of his prolific writing on mysticism and asceticism. He wrote in Latin but also produced many texts directly in English and even in the Northumbrian dialect. His writings were widely influential and he was venerated for at least three hundred years after his death on this day in the year 1349.

January- February 2024:

- January 18, Wedding, 2:00 p.m.
- January 20, Wedding, 2:00 p.m.
- January 21, Vestry meeting, 11:00 a.m.
- January 21, Wedding, 3:00 p.m.
- January 28, Annual General Meeting, 11:00 a.m.
- January 28, Wedding, 2:30p.m.

- February 1, Healing mass, 3:00 p.m.
- February 13, Shrove Tuesday/Pancake Supper, 5:30 p.m.
- February 14, Ash Wednesday
- February 29, Healing mass, 3:00 p.m.

*****Ongoing registration for Confirmation, and Reception. *****