



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This weekend's Gospel for Trinity Sunday speaks our Mission Statement:

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. (Matthew 28:19-20a)

This is a great reminder to us that even amidst COVID (maybe even *especially* amidst COVID) we are still called to proclaim the Gospel. St. Paul says to Timothy that he is to proclaim the word "**whether it is convenient or inconvenient**" (II Timothy 4:2).

This is our call today.

Many times, we may feel overwhelmed by this call to make disciples – to evangelize. Maybe it's because we're afraid of coming off as "preachy" and trying to force our view on other people, maybe because we don't know how to do it, or maybe because we don't feel like we know enough about our faith to answer all of the person's questions.

Here are some reflections on these obstacles to sharing the Good News about Jesus. When we talk about Jesus, if we were talking philosophy, a certain viewpoint or a moral system, we might fall into the trap of trying to "convert people to our way of thinking." But the reality is that central to our faith is not a way of thinking or acting, but of relationship with a person (in fact, three Persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). When we share about our love of Jesus (or the Father or the Holy Spirit) we do it from a point of view of: "This person has so enriched my life, set me free, and loves me so much! You have to get to know Him, too." We have no problem sharing with our friends and co-workers about great books we read, and movies or shows we watch. We share with pride pictures of our grandkids. Will we not share how Jesus has transformed our lives, given us hope through the pandemic, and comfort in our darkest hours? We aren't called to "pontificate," but to share our Good News. This might take the form of passing out a CD ("This touched me so much; you should hear it, too"), or a book ("I can't believe how much this helped me through x, y and z"), or some other "non-threatening" means. It could be just reaching out to a person in need. We don't "preach," we share our joy.

At the center of making disciples is not a program or "proper way of saying things" but relationship. First, it's about our relationship with God. Second, it's about our relationship with the other person. The best way to share Christ is to share Him with people who trust you. This means that they have to know that we love them. This means building a friendship with others (not because we want to convert them, but because we love them). We want to share our best friend with our other friends, right? So, we build friendship with a person, and then share Christ with him or her.

As for not knowing enough about our faith – no one does. The joy is that in heaven, we will spend all eternity growing in knowledge of God. We don't have to have answers to all objections. We don't have to know everything there is to know about the faith. We need to know only how Jesus has helped us and changed our lives. When we share that, then we say with St. Philip the Apostle, "**Come and see**" (John 1:46). We help them have an encounter with Christ and let Christ do the rest.

Let us ask God for that clarity to see how He has moved in our lives, and for the wisdom and courage we need to share this Good News with those we love.