

TRINITY 3
2 Kings 4:8-11;14-16
Rom 6:3-4;8-11
Mt 10 :37-42

We make choices every day of the week and all our choices have consequences which vary in gravity. Some will cause distress, even if they were the right choice to make. St Paul asks his Roman readers whether they had forgotten that when they chose to be baptised as a disciple of Christ, they not only shared in his suffering and death, but also in his resurrection and new life.

Choosing to be committed to Jesus is not a choice to take a ride in the park. Jesus said he brings a sword, not peace. Yet this sword is not a sword of destruction, but the sword of decision. When Moses encountered his people singing and dancing around the Golden Calf they had made, he angrily demanded, "Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come to me (Ex 32:26). The choice was one of life or of death. So it is with the choice to follow Jesus or reject him. Making this decision can cause ruptures between friends and especially within families. Those of you who chose to enter into full Catholic Communion from Anglicanism know this only too well.

It is no comfort, but nevertheless true, that many ancient saints like Sts Felicitas and Perpetua and numerous martyrs in our own generation value their choice of Jesus over their family or their own lives. They make this choice because they trust in Jesus' statement that true life can only be found in the Kingdom of God.

You and I together with every other disciple of Jesus, have been commissioned through baptism and confirmation to be an agent of Jesus. As he is the agent of the Father, that makes us agents of the Father's agent. Those who hospitably receive Jesus' agent receive the blessing both of him and the Father.

This is the situation for the Shunamite childless couple who, though not Israelites, befriended Elisha because they recognised him as a holy man. In receiving the prophet Elisha, they received the God of Israel who prophet Elisha was and were blessed with the gift of a son.

Despite current hostility towards the Catholic Church, some people are looking for connections with God and the Church and they want those connections before they are prepared to make a commitment. We must bear this in mind, so as Elijah passes through the Shunamite village and Jesus standing in the marketplace and Temple, so disciples must be accessible to others. We must make it clear that we are people of faith, not only in what we say but in our lives. We must make ourselves available to others, not only by offering time to others, but making them feel that they are welcome and important to God. We must also be approachable. There is no point being accessible and available if people think they cannot approach us.

Making a choice for Jesus and for the Catholic Church is a difficult and in some ways, costly choice. Our ministry as disciples is to enable those who approach to make that choice freely and with commitment.

We must never forget that the reason why some people are not Christians is because of some who are.

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