



Come & See Step 5

Missionary Disciples - Chosen and set apart:

The call of our Baptism:

By virtue of their baptism and confirmation, all Christians somehow share in the priesthood of Christ. Each has been chosen, set apart and commissioned.

Everyone who belongs to the Church has the responsibility to continue Christ's work and to share the mission of the Church. While there is a common mission which belongs to all members of this priestly people there is at the same time a variety of ministries. The ordained ministry is but one of these and needs to be seen in the context of the ministry to which the Church as a whole is called.

Many of the words which Jesus addressed to his original disciples on the need to see themselves as servants of others, were addressed to all followers of Christ, whatever their rank or status in the Church.

The Church, although by divine origin and guided by the Holy Spirit, is also a human organisation, and has always been very much shaped by her historical environment, just as she is being shaped by the environment of today.

Different parish communities have different needs, but in every parish there is the common need to draw people into the actively life of the Church so that they can use their talents in a way that makes them feel they have a real role in the Church – that they truly are Church.

There are so many needs and so many human resources that no members of the Church should remain unwanted or unfulfilled. In his letter to the people of Corinth St Paul uses well the imagery of the Church as a body with different parts, all needing one another to function and survive. He also stresses that amongst the people of God *'there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit, and varieties of ministry, but to the same Lord; and varieties of activities, but it is the same God who inspires them in everyone... each is given for the common good.'* (Cor 12:4-7)

Text from 'At Home with God's People' Chapter on *Ministry & Mission*

A Missionary Church:

The Mission of the Church is to make God's love known, through the message of the Gospel, the Good News.

We are called to share in the Discipleship of Jesus whose missionary role was three fold:

PRIEST

PROPHET

KING

Service

Proclaim God's word

Steward of all Creation

Needs are met

Truth is told

God is honoured & worshipped

Discipleship today (notes from PD Session with Fr Anthony Gittins – Perth, May 2018)

Discipleship is the common call that unites those who have been baptised.

Marks Gospel shows the followers of Jesus, especially the men, struggling to understand the meaning. For Jesus, discipleship means radical inclusion – and radical equality. We are all in this together, no matter who we are, what our background or status in life.

Jesus became a human being to show us how to live life to the full, as sons and daughters of God. Discipleship is God's initiation not ours. Those who are called to be disciples will have had a direct encounter of some kind with God, or the sense of being of being called by God. Disciples have a sense of direction; one that very often is not the direction in which the world seems to be heading.

Discipleship costs:

Discipleship is counter cultural, therefore seriously challenging, and not for the feint hearted. It requires us to go against the flow. To try and show others there is a different path than the one that society in general seems to promote and accept.

Questions to ponder:

- How do I see discipleship being lived out amongst my family, my friends, in my place of study or work?
- How do I see discipleship being lived out within my parish and the wider Church community? Within society?
- Which of the missionary activities or agencies taking place in my parish / the Church in general do I find most inspiring or challenging, are there any in particular I feel drawn to in some way?

Jesus went into other people's spaces and either challenged or invited them into new spaces. Some responded positively, despite the risk or cost involved, and were made to feel welcome and comfortable within the new space. Others walked away, often down hearted.

Luigi Guissani (Priest in Milan Diocese from the late 1950's) developed a thriving Youth Ministry in which the focus was always on the Christian **fact** – the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The method involved three core elements which Luigi regarded as the basics for living out the Christian life:

1. A systematic means of helping individuals *relate the life of Jesus to their own life*. Dialogue – scripture reflection and a sharing of personal lived experiences were essential in the process.
2. Engagement in the *Community Dimension* of faith. Luigi believed young people needed help to engage in experiences that developed awareness of
 - culture: through a range of experiences and expressions;
 - charitable works: the aim of which is to live as Christ lived;
 - mission: in unity with the Church and each other – he arranged for students to go overseas and work on missionary projects under the direction of the local bishops – and later to share their experiences of growing in relationship with Christ to others.

Authentic Christian community is about unity, (with the trinity and one another) and obedience to God and the Church. Luigi even involved the students in reflection and comment on the new Vatican documents that were being written – their feedback was received by Rome.