

Reflection - Mark 9: 9-13 (Of the day) St Thomas, Apostle John 20: 24-29

Today I was struck by two acts of 'calling' by Jesus. Firstly, to Matthew in, what would have been, the regular Gospel of the day, and secondly, that of Thomas on his memorial.

Matthew is called, quite starkly to be an Apostle of Jesus. But what were his credentials for such an important task? We learn from the following paragraph that the hierarchy of the day, the Pharisees, were certainly not impressed! Jesus sits down at a meal with a number of tax collectors and sinners, of which Matthew is both. But, in Jesus' choices, he is not looking for perfection but potential. What he requires, as expressed to the Pharisees, is mercy and compassion and the desire to reach out to others in his name. He says, "I did not come to call the virtuous but sinners." So, there is immediate hope for us all!

Thomas the Apostle is an example of fallibility. Another weakness that we all share! He cannot believe in the resurrection of Jesus unless he sees the marks on his hands and side. But Jesus shows, yet again, his constant compassion and mercy. He calls Thomas only to believe.

Sometimes, perhaps often, God seems to be absent from our lives. We lose our job or experience the loss of a loved one. A little child suffers. "Where is the God who loves us then?" we may ask. I suppose that God could say in reply, "Where are you for others?" Jesus showed compassion to Thomas who had lived and known Jesus throughout his ministry, witnessed his miracles, and then deserted and now doubted him.

Jesus called both Matthew and Thomas to believe in him and to follow him. Which means, to be like him. To show compassion and mercy as he did. In so doing we too will find his presence.