

Hebrews 8: 6-13

Mark 3: 13-19

Today we hear the word ‘Covenant.’ A permanent agreement that is made between people. We speak of a marriage Covenant made by a man and a woman on their wedding day. So, it was that God made a Covenant with the Jewish people when he led them out of their slavery. God would lead them and they, in their turn, would follow his commandments. The writer of Hebrews regrets that the Israelites broke their side of the covenant and lost the opportunity of entering the Promised Land. But now he is declaring that God has made a new Covenant with all men. Through the life, death and resurrection of his son, Jesus, he has set us free. He has given us a new start in a new Covenant relationship of love. A Covenant that will never be broken by him. He will love us always and forever, no matter what. He says, ”I will put my laws (of love) into their minds and write them on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people.” The way ahead is clear and open to ALL, “The least no less than the greatest.”

But how is this to be achieved? We humans can be just as fickle as the Israelites were. In God’s new Covenant we have the on-going gift of repentance and healing. He will, “Forgive their iniquities and never call their sins to mind.” But we do need direction. Which is why we learn in the Gospel that, ‘He summoned those he wanted.’ ‘They were to be his companions and to be sent out to preach, with power (even) to cast out devils.’ Those twelve Apostles occur in even greater numbers today, in the form of the Priesthood. We thank God for the ministry of that Priesthood. But we must not forget that we are also part of the Royal priesthood. Through our Baptism we agree to live out and keep our side of the Covenant and we too are called to go out and preach the Good News of love.