

29TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

Ex 17: 8-13 II Timothy 3: 14--42 Luke 18:1-8

HOMILY

We are within the Extraordinary Month of Mission as decreed by Pope Francis

But today, being World Mission Sunday, it is a peak moment of this call to mission.

In our parish, I would like to link it with the programme “Journey in Faith” advertised in our Newsletter as starting on 5th November.

It is that programme popularly known as the **“Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults” (RCIA)**: a programme put together for those who may seek to be baptised or received into the Catholic Faith this coming Easter.

I prefer the term **“Journey in Faith”** for several reasons:

- a) Faith is first and for most a **“journey”** but a journey that never sees an end
- b) Which means that even those of us who have made their baptism and other sacraments are still walking the journey.
- c) It is a deception to look at oneself as having completed the journey just because we have been baptised.

I would like us to pay particular attention to the theme for World Mission Sunday in this Extraordinary Month of Mission.

The Theme this Year is **“Together we are Mission”**

In other words, together we are being commissioned to **“go and make disciples of all peoples.”**

For this reason, I would like to invite everyone who has made their baptisms to link their journeys with those who may be wanting to start their journeys through this programme.

- d) It can be a confirming experience of their journeys.

- e) Not only that, but from their experience, they in turn, it can also nourish those who are seeking.

ABOUT INITIATION

You know, the common question many seekers might have when they come to us asking for baptism or reception into the Catholic Faith is:

“How long does RCIA take?”

This is a bad question but all the same it calls for an answer.

- We might be tempted to show them a schedule of gatherings to ease their anxiety – in fact for the last few days since I returned from Malawi I have been busy putting together a schedule.
- In responding to the question **“How long does RCIA take?”** I can promise i

- a) In this diocese and indeed in this country the minimum requirement is 20 weekly sessions which can run from about November to Easter in April coming to 5 months.
- b) In my home diocese in Malawi it is a matter of a minimum of two years of weekly sessions
- c) In other dioceses in Malawi it will be a minimum of four years of weekly sessions

Whether I can answer the question **“How long does RCIA take?”** by indicating 5 months, two years or four promising initiation by a specific date on the calendar is not right.

Not only that but this is a **dis-service** not only to the process of initiation but also to the good of the seeker.

- You know, the work of initiation belongs to the Holy Spirit.

The goal of the Spirit is not determined by a person’s completion of a course of study.

- ❖ The goal of the Spirit is someone’s complete conversion of heart to the Father through Christ.

Ultimately this is about falling in love, and how long that takes cannot be pre-determined.

The readings today remind us that in a journey of faith persistence is an important virtue to foster.

- ❖ On this journey we are often called to be faithful even when we cannot see that our efforts are making any difference.
- ❖ We are being called to keep at it even when we do not see fruits in the way we interact with others or go about our day.



CONCLUSION

Otherwise, its not far off from 5th November:

I would like it to be a parish Mission programme.

Together we are Mission.

Together let us come and make disciples of each other.