

Tuesday Reflection 06 July 2021

In today's Gospel, Matthew tells of Jesus's sorrow at seeing the crowds "harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd", whereupon He said to His disciples "ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest" (Matthew 9:36-37).

Traditionally, the Church takes this as a call to pray for more vocations to the priesthood, and there is nothing wrong with that, only it tends to let us laity off the hook; as long as we pray, we have done our duty. Nobody said, however, that ordained priests - or professed religious - are the only ones qualified or called to be 'labourers in the harvest'. We are all called to participate in the prophetic, priestly and kingly ministry of Christ.

In his address to the First Communion children on Sunday, Fr. Naz asked them the question "How are you going to grow in the faith? What do you need to be doing?". This is not just a question directed to the children, however, it is addressed to each one of us. We are all called to advance the Kingdom of God, to be 'labourers in the harvest', and one of the tasks is that of evangelisation. Christianity is not just an individual affair; it has an important communal dimension. We are all called to be evangelists, and as lay people we can often reach the parts that priests cannot reach. We all need to share the Good News - it would be extremely selfish of us not to do so. Not by preaching, but by showing that being a Christian is important to us and makes a difference. You might know the story *Whose job is it anyway?* It seems to me quite relevant here.

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

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