

## Homily Matthew 10:1-7

Seeking God is about letting ourselves be found by him. Finding God is not merely a human achievement. We need to realize that God takes the first step – he is the one who searches for us as lost sheep. In the Gospel, Jesus commands his newly-appointed apostles to go out to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The call and sending out of the apostles marks a new stage in Jesus' ministry. Up to this point, Jesus was the one who taught, proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom, cured disease and illness, and cast out unclean spirits. Now, after appointing the twelve as apostles, Jesus gives them authority over unclean spirits, the power to cure every disease and illness, and the charge to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom of God.

The Gospel message first preached by the apostles was an exhortation to conversion and repentance, for the Kingdom of God is at hand (Matthew 4:17). After Jesus' Resurrection the message of repentance remained, but now the people were to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins and the reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Baptism was no longer a sign of repentance, but an effective sign (a sacrament) that forgives sin and introduces the Christian into divine life by sharing in Jesus' death and resurrection.

Jesus worked signs and miracles to bring the people to believe in him, that he is the Christ, the Son of God, who comes into the world to save it and bring it new life. The apostles will work signs and miracles as well, as a testimony to the truth of our salvation in Jesus Christ.

Imagine yourself as one of these disciples. Jesus is standing right in front of you and giving you these instructions. How do

you think you would respond? Would you take Jesus' words literally? Would you believe that you had been given the power to drive out demons and unclean spirits and to heal the afflicted? Are you anxious or fearful about this call? Or are you raring to go and ready try out your new powers?

The reality is: each of us has the ability to heal. Most likely we will not be able to heal a physical illness. However we can help heal someone's spirit or belief in themselves. We have the power to gift another person with our care, love and attention. All of these gifts are healing gifts. And we also need to receive these gifts from others.

The Apostles heard the sermon on the mount and could communicate that message on their first mission trip: the beatitudes; the fulfilment of the law and the prophets by Jesus of Nazareth; the renewed call to holiness and perfection; not to make a show of almsgiving, prayer and fasting; that we should lay up treasure in heaven and serve God alone; that we should trust in God's providence; that God is our Father and that he gives good gifts to his children. Ultimately, the Apostles preached about Jesus, brought the people to know him and encouraged them follow him as his disciples.

After Pentecost the Apostles and the disciples of Jesus would be sent out once again, not just to the lost sheep of Israel, but to all the nations. That sending out continues today. We are sent out to proclaim to the nations the Good News of our salvation. All men and women seek God: this desire is written in the human heart. We are created by God and for God, and God never ceases to draw us to himself. Only in God will we find the truth and happiness that we never stop searching for .

“Although man can forget God or reject him, He never ceases to call every man to seek him, so as to find life and happiness. But this search for God demands of man every effort of intellect, a sound will, ‘an upright heart’, as well as the witness of others who teach him to seek God”

*Today, I invite you to be mindful and give freely of the gifts that you have to share. In this time of lockdown it simply may be spending a few moments on the phone with someone who needs a bit of attention. Later it may be something like taking the time to help a friend with a project or even their cleaning. Or perhaps it is having a relaxing lunch with a friend.*

*I also invite you to be mindful of the gifts that others share with you. You will receive them! Today, may we be mindful of noticing the gifts we receive! May we also be grateful for the love and care of the giver!*