

Mission: Possible

Intro. The urgency of the journey to Jerusalem is turned up from last week's gospel. The disciples have been with the Lord for a while and know a lot *about* his mission. Unlike the previous group, these pairs of disciples are not making room reservations for the Lord. They are now participating in the very real mission of the Lord by bringing the healing word of God themselves.

I. It would be no easy job. The Lord's briefing on their mission was, well, brief. They were to travel light: no extra sandals, no backpack and shockingly for us, *no money!* Don't lollygag; it's a business trip, not a sightseeing trip. Depend on the kindness of strangers. See ya. Oh, and by the way, watch out for the wolves – the human kind. The Lord gave these disciples some serious power: the power to

heal the sick. If they healed someone's child or parent, they would certainly be welcomed. The custom of the Middle East in the Lord's time was to give hospitality to strangers by offering a place to stay and something to eat. They were to live *with* the people, not apart from them. The Lord set them up to succeed! The disciples were not sent as *warriors*, conquering others by violence to establish an *earthly* kingdom. They were sent as *missionaries* to establish a *heavenly* kingdom. Sometimes we can confuse the two especially if we use the language and actions of aggression to convince others of rightness of our way, even with good intentions. Our history of missionary work has not always been kind. The Lord's word to the disciples if they were not welcomed was not to be angry, rather, to just move on. Let God make any judgements. Their

return was jubilant, like kids who won their first little league game. They were astonished demons obeyed them. The Lord must have smiled at their excitement, yet knowing there were difficult times ahead for them. This was just a “practice round.”

[M. McGlone, *Scripture for Life*] The Lord cautioned them not to let it go to their heads since it was not *their* power that caused it, but the Lord’s.

Concl. This week we celebrate the freedom we enjoy in our country. It is good to give thanks for God’s blessings. Our journey as a nation is amazing, but it has not been all peaceful. After gaining our freedom, we often found ourselves failing to recognize the religious and civil freedoms of others. While we have our weaknesses and flaws, this is still a wonderful country to live in. **Our mission of creating the Kingdom of God is a work still to be**

done. Unlike a line from *Mission Impossible*, if we are ridiculed or suffer during the accomplishment of our mission, the Lord will *never* disavow any knowledge of us. Rather, our names will be written in heaven.

Fr. Michael Pendergraft, July 3, 2022