

5th SUN in Easter (A-5) Is God' necessity the mother of our invention or not?

There is a saying: "Necessity is the Mother of Invention." We see it come to pass in the 1st reading, when the apostles institute the deaconate as we know it today. Note that it was born out of the need to feed, and the apostles need to not be distracted from their important ministry.

Have you ever thought about how good leaders investigate their people's needs before beginning in order to know what has to be done? Jesus not only calls but trains us to do what he did in faith. He said: "The one who believes in me will do the works I do." Basically, this means that for people to recognize themselves as Christ's faithful, they must do what he did and live as he lived. We must look around and ask what's needed. Then our works will witness to being called.

So, if we want to make a difference for having lived, then we must live and act as Jesus did. He defended the defenseless, and fed those hungry for food, hope or love. He clothed the naked, those stripped of their dignity by society, and let the sinner know that he was forgiven. He prayed for his enemies, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." He afflicted the comfortable and comforted the afflicted.

So how do we know if our works give witness to being Christians? Go to Galatians 5 and we'll find the fruits of living and working in God's Spirit, which we received at our Baptism. It says, "The fruits of the Spirit are charity, peace, joy, patience, understanding, faithfulness, kindness, generosity and self-control. Our works will be our witness to having the Spirit or not. If we're not kind, patient, faithful, peaceful, or joyful; if we're not generous or understanding or in control of self, then we're not co-operating with the Holy Spirit that is in us.

To be more practical, God is calling because God needs us to be God's hands in service of the needy in this world. Perhaps God's calling you to the deaconate. Perhaps you're called to teach, coach, mentor, or

be a volunteer in a hospital or here in the parish in the pantry or at Mass. Perhaps you're called to be a catechist, who helps our children study their faith as they prepare for the sacraments. Or perhaps you are called to get involved in Social Justice, which gives direct service to the poor, or advocates on their behalf, or empowers them to leave their poverty behind. If we do these things because of Christ, because Christ's Church needs us to, our good works will give witness to our faith.

Today's Gospel gives a seal of approval to our Mission Statement. We began Mass reciting it: "We discover God's love through worship, prayer, study and good works." Without good works, we're not living Christ's or the parish's mission. We're here in worship and in prayer. We invite you to study in our weekly Bible Studies, our GIFT program, or within the RCIA as a member of the team. We offer various programs and retreats to address the need to learn about the faith. We do all this as a prelude to Good Works, which is what gives proof that the one we believe in, Jesus Christ, is our Way, our Truth, and our Life.

May we ask God for the grace to put our proclaimed faith into practice, into witness-mode. May we live as Christ lived, and thus arrive before the Father, and may we be remembered for the good works that we did for Christ's sake and the world's!