14 C

July 4th

MDP of God

In today’s gospel we have the sending out of the seventy- two disciples.  *This is very unique*.  All the gospels mention the twelve disciples and them being commissioned by Jesus to continue his mission.

However *it’s only Luke* who makes a reference to the sending out of the seventy two disciples.

*There must be a reason for this*.  Jesus says that the harvest is big and there aren’t enough people to do the necessary work.

In the same manner Luke wants to tell us that the mission of Jesus is not only carried forward by the so called experts like priests and religious *but it is the responsibility of every believer in Jesus.*

This of course is very much in line with what Vatican II has expressed.  Speaking about the laity the Council Fathers have expressed that it is the right and duty of every baptised person to preach the gospel.  
  
*How are we going to do this?*

Very often I have heard people say that they feel that they don’t have the proper qualifications to be involved in the mission of Jesus.

Many can’t come to terms with the fact that *the work of Jesus requires above all a heart that is passionate enough to share with others what it has already experienced*, **the life-giving Holy Spirit of God living within them**.

*Sometimes we forget that small is very important in the Bible.*

Jesus said that where two or three are gathered in his name He is also present.

He fed so many thousands of people with five loaves and two fish.

He portrayed children as being the ones who truly manifest the qualities that he was encouraging and promoting.

Through Luke, Jesus is saying that we can continue his mission not only by being involved in great and well organised and very well attended programs.

*The mission of Jesus is also accomplished by ordinary people doing ordinary things and being faithful to their responsibilities*.

So often my friends—I’m blessed to see people who do make huge sacrifices for the good of others----Parents who sacrifice so much of themselves for their children

Grandparents who can’t do enough to show their grandchildren how much they love them

So many of our parishioners who give of their time and talent to:

Do physical work around the parish—our men’s work prayer days—a few years ago we transformed the old church into classrooms—now we have men working to build new restrooms downstairs and hopefully in the not too distant future we’ll turn the space below us into a parish hall—mostly done with volunteer labor

So many people who volunteer to bring Holy Communion to those in the hospital or to our homebound

The men and women over the years who gave so much of their time and talent in working on our renewals and now work on our Heart of Jesus retreats—the married couples who’ve worked on our marriage ministry

The members of the choirs and music groups in the parish

The Legion of Mary – the Women’s guild—the fish fry people—the people who work so hard to make our picnic a success—the people who teach PSR—the people who are on the Core team for Lifeteen and the Edge

The Vincent de Paul Society who do so much for the needy

The men and women who bring hope to the people incarcerated in the Geauga County jail

The knights of Columbus—all our coaches who work with the kids on our various sports teams—the ushers, Eucharistic ministers, lectors, servers who enrich our liturgies

**And the list goes on and on**

There’s obviously a cost attached to all of this because people are busy.

But I want to urge you to take an active part in the life of the parish.

Every little gesture of kindness, every single act of service to others, every little word of encouragement helps us to become very aware of our mission and gives us the necessary impetus to live the faith.

These simple and ordinary acts make a difference in the lives of so many people

And my friends—that’s not only true here—it’s true in your place of work—or your school—or when you’re with your family

My friends—*we’re all part of the mission*

Our world desperately needs to hear the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ—there are so many people who don’t have hope—who feel life has no meaning—who feel lost and alone

And my friends—you and I can be God’s instruments to give them hope—to give them a sense of meaning---and most importantly of all –to help them come to know the Lord Jesus so they can be saved

And you can do that in the simple things of everyday life—now if you want to strengthen yourself to be able to answer objections to the faith—we have a wonderful parish library where we have a lot of materials where you can larn more about the faith and how to answer objections

As a parish—we have FORMED—you can go on line and find a wealth of Catholic materials to help you grow in the faith and to help you share the faith with others

There’s a great book that came out last year called, “Let me tell you about my son”—that’s kind of a little plug for my book—but in it –there’s an overview of the Catholic doctrinal and moral teachings and it can help yoou answer objections to the faith

Like the 72 in today’s gospel—let’s accept the call of the Lord

Let’s live the faith----Let’s proclaim the faith

Let’s share the faith with all those we meet

So that like the 72 in today’s gospel we can return to the Lord filled with joy that we’ve made a difference [I’ve asked you in past—who have you shared the faith with?.... As my dad said, “You’ll never start any younger]

God Bless