

A New Disciple *Un Nuevo Discípulo*

Que las palabras de mi boca y la meditación de nuestro corazón sean aceptables ante tus ojos, oh Señor, mi roca y mi salvación. Amén. [Salmos 19:14]

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. Amen. [Psalm 19:14]

Today's Gospel lesson is the conclusion of Jesus' commissioning of and instructions to his disciples about the ministry he has prepared them to undertake. During the commissioning, Jesus empowered his disciples and instructed them on many of the things they would need to know and understand as they prepare to undertake their ministry.

Jesus gave them authority to cast out unclean spirits and to cure disease and sickness. Jesus told them to go among the lost sheep of the house of Israel to proclaim the good news; to cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons, and not to accept any payment for their ministry. Jesus told them to pack light and not take any money with them.

Jesus also told his disciples how to handle situations where they were welcomed and situations where they were not welcomed. Jesus warned his disciples that their ministry and their journey would not be easy. He told them about the many perils, trials, challenges, and tribulations that they would face, saying that he was sending them out like "sheep in the midst of wolves." Jesus counseled his disciples to be "wise like serpents and innocent as doves," and told them to follow his example in their ministry.

In closing, Jesus shares with his disciples that part of the Gospel that is our lesson for today:

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple – truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward." [Matthew 10:40-42]

As I was reading today's Gospel lesson and that part of Matthew, Chapter 10, that came before it, I reflected on the time I have spent these past few months worshipping here at La Gracia and ministering among you. For me it has been a wonderful and enriching experience, largely because of your openness, friendliness, hospitality, generosity, and warm welcoming spirit. La Gracia is a wonderful welcoming congregation that has

embraced Jesus's admonition to welcome one another and the strangers in our midst; and in doing so welcoming Jesus. For me, being a part of this congregation has truly been a blessing. La Gracia and Grace Church is a welcoming place, and the warm welcome I received the very first time I walked through the doors of the church left me with no doubt that Grace would be my church home and family.

Gracias por hacerme una parte de su familia.

Thank you for making me a part of your family.

In thinking about today's Gospel lesson, I reflected on the fact that La Gracia and Grace Church will soon have a new disciple among us: Mother Fanny. Unlike the journey and ministry that Jesus was preparing his disciples to face, I am certain that Mother Fanny will receive a Jesus-like welcome among us befitting a newcomer, prophet, a righteous one, and disciple of Jesus. As with Leslie, Elizabeth, Patrick, and Fred, our supply priest Rich, and the many seminarians who have ministered to La Gracia, I am confident that we will warmly welcome Mother Fanny into La Gracia, and make her a part of La Gracia family, so that she will be able to share her spiritual gifts with us, and so that she can be a blessing to us, and we can be a blessing to her.

En el nombre del Padre, del Hijo, y del Espíritu Santo, Amén.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.