

Readings: *Isaiah 66:10 – 14; Ps. 65 (66):1-6a,14,18; Galatians 6:14-18, Luke 10:1 – 12,17 – 20.*

Last Sunday we heard the beginning of Luke's account of the last journey of Jesus – to Jerusalem.

There are several things we should note about Luke's account.

First, that, unlike the earlier chapters of the gospel, chapters 10 to 19 contain very few miracles.

There are only four healings – the exorcising of a demon (11:14); the healing of a crippled woman (13:10); the cure of a man with dropsy (14:2); and the cleansing of sufferers from leprosy (17:11).

But, secondly, these chapters contain many parables – including several found only in Luke's gospel – for example: 'The Good Samaritan' (10:30); 'The Prodigal Son' (15:11); 'Dives and Lazarus' (16:19); 'The Pharisee and the Tax Collector' (18:9). These lead us to a third feature of the account – Luke is concerned to show us Jesus more as a teacher than as a worker of miracles. Over the next eighteen weeks most of the Sunday Gospel Readings will present us with an aspect of the teaching of Jesus, which Luke wanted to impress upon his readers.

Fourthly, there are several points at which Jesus speaks specifically to his disciples (as well as some in which he speaks to the crowds or to opponents). Lastly, Luke makes a point – some half dozen times – of reminding his readers that Jesus is travelling to Jerusalem.

I think it's fair to conclude that Luke intended this part of his gospel to be a 'Manual for Disciples'.

If this is so, we have heard today the first thing we are to learn about being a disciple.

Jesus – having already sent the Twelve to preach and heal – now *appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit.*

Only Luke records this mission of the seventy-two (or, as some manuscripts say, seventy).

Traditionally seventy was the number of different nations in the world. So Luke seems to be teaching that the Lord's mission of salvation for all nations will be carried out – after the Resurrection – not just by the apostles, but by many – perhaps all – disciples.

This was to be the theme of Luke's second volume, *The Acts of the Apostles*, in which, in Christ's name, *repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem* (Luke 24: 47).

Pray that we and all Christians may be given the grace to share in this mission of the Lord.

NOTE.

The passages in which Luke refers to Christ's journey are: -

10:38 *As they went on their way.*

11:53 *As he went away from there.*

11:22 *He went on his way.*

14:25 *Great multitudes accompanied him.*

17:11 *On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee.*

18: 31 *Taking the Twelve he said to them 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem.*

19: 1 *He entered Jericho and was passing through.*

19: 28 *He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.*