

Answering the Call

Jesus called the Twelve to be his companions, and through his Holy Spirit at Pentecost, he gave each of them a mission.

Peter wrote letters and was the first bishop of Antioch before going to Rome. James, son of Zebedee, went to Spain before returning to Judaea. Andrew preached in the Ukraine and Greece. Philip went to Turkey and Greece. Bartholomew, travelled extensively in India, Ethiopia, and Armenia. Matthew wrote the Gospel and preached in Ethiopia, among other places. Thomas is known for his missionary work in India. James, son of Alphaeus, became the first bishop of Jerusalem and wrote his Epistle. His brother, Thaddeus, wrote the Epistle of Jude and was known as the "Apostle to the Armenians."

Simon the Zealot preached alongside Thaddeus, including in Iraq. Judas, who rejected his mission, was replaced by Mattias, who founded a church in Cappadocia and preached in the Caspian Sea regions.

All eleven of these apostles were martyred, killed for preaching the Gospel. Only John, the brother of James, the other Son of Thunder, lived a long life taking care of the Virgin Mary and writing a Gospel, Epistles and the Apocalypse, on Patmos before dying peacefully in old age at Ephesus.

I'd like to go back and mention Judas, who refused the mission set out for him by God, choosing rather the mission of evil men. For there are those who preach the Gospel, and there are those who try to prevent it, at all costs.

So why did Jesus choose Judas? When Jesus looked at the Twelve, he saw their individual potential, he saw the reason God had created each and every one of them, the mission they were to fulfil on their journey to heaven. And that's the same thing Jesus sees when he looks at you: your mission, your potential.

God created you for a purpose and gave you a personal mission to help you fulfil your saintly potential. If you reject it, God simply chooses somebody else, and the Church and the world moves on, as it did without Judas, as it will without you. I bear witness to that truth. I was due to be ordained a priest in 1999, 26 years ago. I too turned my back on my mission.

Have you answered your call? Have you fulfilled your potential? No? Then it's time. Look, here I am, 28 years after leaving seminary. I'm ready now. It's never too late. Look to Peter, not Judas. Where is the past? It's in the past. Let it go. Don't live with regret. Think of the present moment and cry out to God, "Here I am, Lord, I'm ready now! Draw me after you, Jesus. Let us run!"