

11th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)



Matthew 9:36–10:8

‘Jesus called to him his twelve disciples and sent them out.’

At that time: When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.’

And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. The names of the twelve Apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, ‘Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.’

Reflection

In today’s Gospel, Jesus sees the crowds and feels compassion for them because they are lost, struggling, and in need of hope. He calls His disciples and sends them out to share the Good News, care for people, and bring kindness and healing wherever they go. Jesus doesn’t just call the disciples in the Gospel – He calls us too. As members of Youth SVP, we are part of that mission, called to notice people who may feel lonely, left out, or struggling, and to respond with kindness and compassion. Sometimes living out our faith looks like big acts of service, but often it’s the small everyday things that matter most: checking in on someone, including others, listening properly, or simply being there when someone needs support. Jesus reminds us that the love, kindness, and hope we have received are meant to be shared freely with others.

Materials needed

- 12 Apostle cards
- Pens
- Paper

Activity

The Apostles were all very different people – some were confident leaders, some doubted, some stayed in the background, and some made mistakes – yet Jesus still called each one of them.

As you look through the cards, think about which Apostle you relate to most and why. Which of their qualities inspire you? Which challenges do you recognise in yourself?

Discuss which Apostle would make the best Youth SVP member and why?

Remember: Jesus didn’t choose perfect people – He chose ordinary people who were willing to follow Him and make a difference.

Call to Action

We have each been given a mission, to tell others about Jesus and His Kingdom. How are you going to live out this mission?



SIMON PETER

Feast Day: 29 June



Personality: Bold, passionate, and determined

Job Before Jesus: Fisherman

Known For: Being the leader of the Apostles and the "rock" of the Church

Strength: Courage and leadership

Weakness: Sometimes acted before thinking

Fun Fact: Peter walked on water towards Jesus!

Symbol: Keys- Jesus gives Peter the "keys of the Kingdom of Heaven"

His Story:

Peter was one of Jesus' first disciples and became one of His closest friends throughout His ministry. During Jesus' Passion, Peter became afraid and denied knowing Him three times, but after the Resurrection he was forgiven by Jesus and went on to lead the early Church with courage and faith.

ANDREW

Feast Day: 30 November



Personality: Friendly, welcoming, and encouraging

Job Before Jesus: Fisherman

Known For: Bringing people to Jesus, including Peter

Strength: Welcoming and encouraging others

Weakness: Often stayed in the background

Fun Fact: Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland!

Symbol: X-shaped cross- Tradition says Andrew was martyred on a cross like this because he felt unworthy to die the same way as Jesus.

His Story:

Andrew was fishing with his brother Peter when Jesus called them to follow Him. Throughout the Gospel, Andrew is often seen bringing people to Jesus, showing how even small actions can help others encounter Christ.

JAMES (SON OF ZEBEDEE)

Feast Day: 25 July



Personality: Energetic, passionate, and outspoken

Job Before Jesus: Fisherman

Known For: Being one of Jesus' closest disciples

Strength: Passion and loyalty

Weakness: Could be hot-headed

Fun Fact: He was the first Apostle to be martyred.

Symbol: Pilgrim staff- He is often associated with pilgrimage and missionary journeys

His Story:

James was one of the disciples closest to Jesus and was present at key moments such as the Transfiguration and Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane before His arrest. After Jesus' Resurrection, James continued preaching the Gospel and eventually became the first Apostle to be martyred.

JOHN



Feast Day: 27 December

Personality: Caring, thoughtful, and loyal

Job Before Jesus: Fisherman

Known For: Writing the Gospel of John

Strength: Love and faithfulness

Weakness: Wanted recognition at times

Fun Fact: John is known as "the disciple Jesus loved."

Symbol: Heart- John is closely associated with Jesus' love and is often called the "beloved disciple."

His Story:

John followed Jesus closely throughout His ministry and remained with Him even during the Crucifixion, when many others had fled. Jesus entrusted Mary to John's care at the Cross, and later John wrote the Gospel and letters that focus strongly on love and faith.

PHILIP



Feast Day: 3rd May

Personality: Curious and thoughtful

Job Before Jesus: Unknown

Known For: Bringing Nathanael to Jesus

Strength: Friendly and curious

Weakness: Sometimes doubted

Fun Fact: Philip asked Jesus how to feed the 5,000 people.

Symbol: Basket of bread: Linked to the feeding of the 5,000, where Philip questions how they could possibly feed the crowd.

His Story:

Philip was called personally by Jesus and soon invited Nathanael to come and meet Him too. During Jesus' ministry, Philip often asked honest questions, such as during the feeding of the 5,000,

BARTHOLOMEW (NATHANAEL)



Feast Day: 24 August

Personality: Honest and genuine

Job Before Jesus: Unknown

Known For: His honesty and faith

Strength: Truthfulness

Weakness: Was unsure about Jesus at first

Fun Fact: Jesus said there was "no deceit" in him.

Symbol: Open book- He is associated with preaching the Gospel

His Story:

Bartholomew, also known as Nathanael, first doubted whether Jesus could really be the Messiah when Philip invited him to meet Him. After speaking with Jesus personally, he recognised who Jesus truly was and became a loyal disciple.

(DOUBTING) THOMAS



Feast Day: 3 July

Personality: Honest, thoughtful, and questioning

Job Before Jesus: Unknown

Known For: Doubting Jesus' resurrection at first

Strength: Honest questions and strong faith

Weakness: Found it hard to believe sometimes

Fun Fact: Thomas travelled far to share the Gospel, possibly to India.

Symbol: Tools- Reflects tradition that he travelled as a missionary and may have been involved in building the Church in India.

His Story:

After Jesus rose from the dead, Thomas found it difficult to believe the other disciples when they told him they had seen Jesus alive. When Jesus later appeared to him and invited Thomas to touch His wounds, Thomas made a powerful profession of faith and went on to share the Gospel boldly.

MATTHEW



Feast Day: 21 September

Personality: Reflective and determined to change

Job Before Jesus: Tax collector

Known For: Writing the Gospel of Matthew

Strength: Changed his life to follow Jesus

Weakness: Others judged him for his past

Fun Fact: Jesus called Matthew while he was at work collecting taxes.

Symbol: Coins: He was a tax collector before following Jesus, so money is a clear symbol of his past life.

His Story:

Matthew was working as a tax collector, a job many people disliked, when Jesus called him to leave everything behind and follow Him. Matthew accepted immediately, and his life became a powerful example of forgiveness, conversion, and new beginnings.

JAMES (SON OF ALPHAEUS)

Feast Day: 3 May

Job Before Jesus: Unknown

Known For: Quietly following Jesus

Strength: Faithfulness

Weakness: Little is known about him

Fun Fact: He is sometimes called "James the Less."

Symbol: Footprints: The footprints represent steady discipleship and quietly walking with Christ each day.

His Story:

Although the Gospels do not tell us much about James the Less, he stayed faithful as one of the twelve Apostles throughout Jesus' ministry. His story reminds us that even people who are not always in the spotlight still have an important role in God's plan.

SIMON THE ZEALOT



Feast Day: 28 October

Job Before Jesus: Zealot/revolutionary

Known For: Passion for his beliefs

Strength: Commitment

Weakness: Could be extreme

Fun Fact: Simon may have travelled with Jude to preach the Gospel.

Symbol: Fish- can symbolise mission and preaching

His Story:

Before following Jesus, Simon belonged to the Zealots, a group strongly opposed to Roman rule. Jesus called him alongside disciples with very different backgrounds, showing how faith can unite people despite their differences.

THADDAEUS (JUDE)



Feast Day: 28 October

Job Before Jesus: Unknown

Known For: Asking Jesus questions at the Last Supper

Strength: Hope and perseverance

Weakness: Often overlooked

Fun Fact: St Jude is the patron saint of lost causes.

Symbol: Flame- Represents the Holy Spirit, courage, and his letters encouraging hope and perseverance.

His Story:

Thaddaeus, also known as Jude, followed Jesus faithfully and asked Him questions during the Last Supper to better understand His teaching. After the Resurrection, Jude travelled to preach the Gospel and later became known as the patron saint of hopeless causes because of his message of hope.

JUDAS ISCARIOT



Feast Day: None

Job Before Jesus: Treasurer for the group

Known For: Betraying Jesus

Strength: Trusted with responsibility

Weakness: Could be extreme

Fun Fact: Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

Symbol: Silver coins: Represents the 30 pieces of silver he received for betraying Jesus (Matthew 26:15).

His Story:

Judas travelled with Jesus and the other disciples throughout His ministry and was trusted to look after the group's money. Shortly before Jesus' arrest, Judas betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver, and his story serves as a reminder of the danger of letting greed and fear take over.