

Homily. 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year.C. 29/30 June 2019.

The reason that it's important for us to note the word 'resolutely' when St. Luke tells us that Jesus 'resolutely took the road for Jerusalem' is that it speaks of the firmness and determination with which He set out on a new phase of His mission. Until this point He'd been focused on Galilee, on establishing Himself and on calling and forming His disciples. Now a turning point of great significance had been reached. The journey to the centre and to His final confrontation with His destiny had come. What we have to understand is that Jesus was absolutely resolved to see this journey through no matter what the consequences might be.

In Luke's story this journey takes up the rest of his gospel, leading us to the Cross, His Resurrection and Ascension and to the Pentecost outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Only after all of this will the disciples, empowered by God's living presence in them, move out in mission from that City to the far corners of the world. In Luke's gospel the story of Jesus mission is shaped somewhat like an hourglass; from the top in rural Northern Galilee down through the narrow centre and Jerusalem, then outwards and ever wider to the whole world. It's in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke's 2nd work, that we hear of this apostolic mission.

Back now to this weekend where we listen to the beginning of this turning point, this committed resolute journey. Heading due South Jesus chose to go through the Samaritan lands between Galilee and Jerusalem. He could have avoided this territory and its people by sticking to the edge of

the Jordan River, but such ducking and dodging of the hard tasks wasn't Jesus way and nor was it God's will. With Him went the 12 disciples, along with the comings and goings of a larger uncounted number of men and women who traveled some if not all of the way with Him. The first incident we hear is one of rejection by a Samaritan village. James and John wanted to wreck revenge on them, but Jesus wasn't having no such thing. He simply moved on to the next place along the way.

The three encounters that follow with people who want to walk with Jesus stress the resoluteness required of those who are wanting to join. The way of the Lord means constantly moving onwards, with only God and each other to rely upon. It is all about proclaiming the Kingdom of God, a way that's focused on Life, not death. Lastly, once this way is embarked upon it begets of no turning back, no second thoughts. The urgency of the Lord's mission to the centre which Jerusalem represents and His final show down requires a strong and clear firmness of resolve and purpose.

No one is forced by Jesus to take the journey with Him. It is a choice they knowingly and freely make. As followers of Christ who practice our faith, we have chosen this way for ourselves, renewing our choice every day while expressing, deepening and nourishing our walk together with Jesus in each Eucharist. We've know, as St. Paul says, that we've been made free by Christ so that we can yield ourselves over to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, discovering thereby our true purpose, hope and meaning in Jesus way. Let's never forget this as we who are on the journey and the way of the Lord our give thanks to God in this sacred place.

