

“Seen any good movies recently?”

This is a question I get asked a lot because, as you know,
I sometimes go to the movies on my day off.

And today, I can answer, *“Yes, I saw a really good movie recently!”*

SCREEN: The Life of Chuck

The movie is called, The Life of Chuck.

It’s hard to describe it without giving away too much.

It’s a bit of an ‘end of the world’/coming of age/fantasy film.

So definitely not your typical summer blockbuster movie.

The title character is Charles Krantz - Chuck to his friends.

When Chuck was just a boy, his parents died in a car crash,
so he was raised by his grandparents.

To help him overcome his sadness and discover some joy in life,
Chuck’s grandma teaches him to dance.

And it works - dancing helps him deal with his sadness and also
wins him a date with the girl of his dreams.

But as he grows older, Chuck seems to lose his way in life -
he gets caught up in the rat race, and forgets all about dancing.

Telling you much more would give the movie away - go see it -
but it makes you think about really deep questions like,

“What’s the purpose of my life?”

“Am I on the right track or have I lost my way?” AND

“Where do I fit into the grand scheme of things?”

SCREEN: blank red background

In today’s Gospel, we heard about a time when

Jesus gave his followers a mission -

a purpose that would fuel their passion, fill them with joy,
and help them discover their place in Christ’s Kingdom.

By hearing what they did, we can discover our mission too.

Let's dive in.

Now we all know that Jesus had 12 Apostles.

They were his core group, his inner circle who were with him 24/7 for three years.

But he had a wider group of followers, called disciples.

One day Jesus brought 72 of them together,

and basically said:

*You've heard my sermons and witnessed my miracles,
the time has come for you to go out on the road
and share your faith with others.*

I don't know about you, but if I were one of the 72, I'd have been terrified!

Me, go out there and share my faith? No way!

I'm just a follower, part of the entourage, but I can't take center stage.

But Jesus knew that they had to do this.

Not only would they be helping others find their way to God's Kingdom

it would also be the best way for them to grow in faith.

By sending them out, Jesus was making it clear

that faith is a gift that must be shared.

Jesus even gave them the very first word to share with others:

SCREEN: peace

'Into whatever house you enter, first say,

'Peace to this household.'

Peace.

Not: *You're a sinner!*

Not: *God will get you!*

Not: *Do better or else!*

No.

Jesus told his disciples, *"start with peace."*

Simple, upbeat, joyful.

So, how'd they do?

We heard that “*The seventy-two returned rejoicing.*”

In other words, it worked!

They went to those who’d never met or heard of Jesus and brought hope and salvation.

All because Jesus said that the faith he gave them was meant to be given away.

This message today is not just about what the disciples of the past did...

it's about what God is calling his disciples to do today.

SCREEN: blank red background

You have been given a mission.

Jesus wants you to take the gift of faith and share it with others.

See, the mistake that many churchgoers make is that they see their faith as a private matter, as something personal - ‘It’s me and Jesus’ and they think that’s enough.

But it isn’t.

Having a personal relationship with Christ is essential - it's the first step for salvation.

But something more is required.

Faith, by its very nature, is meant to be shared.

That’s why God gives us faith.

If you keep it to yourself, you’re missing the most important point of faith.

And sharing faith is the best way for us to grow and to help build Christ’s Kingdom.

Every day, millions of people in our world wake up without peace, with no hope and no joy.

I meet them all the time and so do you.

Whenever you share your faith, you bring happiness and joy to their lives

and you help them discover their purpose in life and how they fit into the grand scheme of things.

But I know that sharing your faith is a challenge, it's not easy by any stretch.

It's much more comfortable to stay in the background, just remaining a follower, but Jesus needs you to be like the disciples in today's Gospel; to step out in faith, take center stage, so that others will come to know who he really is.

What does that mean....how do you do it?

Well, it begins by being like the disciples in today's Gospel.

SCREEN: give peace to others

Start by deciding that you will be a person of peace.

See each day - every person and every situation - as an opportunity to give peace to others.

Which means being loving and kind, generous and forgiving.

Giving peace also means not judging other people.

Not labeling or dividing or criticizing others.

You can give peace by reaching out to the lonely, the outcast, and those living on the margins of society.

Any time you choose to do these things, you make Jesus known and like the disciples, you share the gift of faith.

You are the best way for Christ to be discovered.

Today, at this Mass, Christ calls and sends you.

And he is sending you out there (point) and saying:

Go share your faith!

Now, every disciple's journey is different.

The places to which God sends you are different from mine and everyone else's.

God has uniquely placed you in the world.

You can touch lives no one else can touch.

But this only happens when you see the great gift God has given you and say 'yes' to your mission.

If you only stay where it's safe, and with what you know, you won't be very successful in sharing your faith.

Every day is a new step in the journey of discipleship.

Every day God brings people into your life and says:

share my message of peace,

tell them how much I love them.

Here's another really practical way you can live out today's message.

SCREEN: Lord, where do you want me to serve?

With summer upon us, and life slowing down a little bit, now is the perfect time to reflect on where God might be sending you to serve.

Is the Lord calling you to step into a new ministry at the parish?

We have a dedicated core group of volunteers who make possible everything we do on the weekend, but the simple truth is we need more parishioners serving.

SCREEN: SPXSERVE

You can step up to serve right now as a greeter, member of a host team, as a lector, altar server, eucharistic minister, or on our tech team.

The time commitment is reasonable and we provide all the training.

You can also serve in one of our ministries for kids or students or adult small groups. which will be starting again in September.

And taking that step is so easy.

Just text SPXSERVE to 84576 and we will follow up with you and get you serving.

And let me mention one final way for you to be like the disciples in today's gospel.

SCREEN: Lord, show me who needs your peace today.

In this coming week, begin each day with this simple prayer request:

Lord, show me who needs your peace today.

And then be open to the people God brings into your life throughout the day.

It might be a family member or friend, a co-worker, classmate,
neighbor, parishioner, or stranger.

It might happen when you're at the pool, the grocery store, the gym,
or here at church.

And when that encounter happens,
offer a simple, positive message to him or her.

Not a sermon - no preaching - just a kind, uplifting, positive word
that can give some peace.

And if they mention something they are struggling with,
letting them know that you will be praying for them can be
a source of comfort and peace.

SCREEN: blank red background

I started this message talking about the movie I saw.

Charles Krantz came to discover his place in the universe
and the impact he could make on the lives of others.

Today, may each of us come to the same realization.

May we see our lives and our faith as gifts from God
to be generously shared with others each and every day. Amen. +