



In today's Gospel reading a Jewish scribe comes up to Jesus and says, 'I will follow you wherever you go', Jesus was no doubt very pleased with this man's enthusiastic desire to become his follower, but he also reminded him of the harsh reality of what was involved in following him, 'the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head'. In other words, you will be following someone who doesn't have a stable home but will be constantly on the move. We know from the gospels that it was only when Jesus got to Jerusalem for the last time that he was finally forced to stop his travels, and that was because he was nailed to a cross.

How does this encounter between Jesus and the scribe speak to us today?

The Lord continues to call us to follow him, not in the sense of physically going where he goes, but in the sense of walking in his way, living in the same generous, loving, way as he did. If we are to respond to the Lord's call today, we need a strong desire to be his follower. We need something of the desire of the scribe in the gospel reading. We also need a realistic recognition that following the Lord today won't always be easy. **In many ways, being the Lord's disciple today is as counter-cultural as it was in the time of Jesus. To decide to become the Lord's disciple is a big step and won't always be easy.**

It is not always easy to retain our idealism, our enthusiasm, our generosity of spirit over the long haul, especially when the cross comes our way in one shape or form. It is then that we realize that our own enthusiasm and generosity of spirit is not enough. **We need the Lord to be our strength when we lose heart, our inspiration when we are tempted to settle for less, and our refuge when we come face to face with the storms of life.** We can only be faithful to our following of the Lord if we allow the Lord at the same time to be our resource, our food for the journey.

As disciples of the Lord today, we need both something of this man's enthusiasm and something of Jesus' somber realism. We may be fortunate to have a place to lay our head, but following Jesus remains a challenging path. **Taking the way that Jesus calls us to take will involve a readiness to deny ourselves in the service of the Lord and his people, a willingness to empty ourselves so that others can be filled.** Our enthusiasm for the Lord and our recognition that following him will not be easy are two contrasting poles that we need to keep holding in tension.

Let us pray:

Lord, I do commit myself to following You wherever You go. I choose Your most holy will above all things. Help me to live faithfully in accord with Your divine will and to say "Yes" to You every day.

Jesus, I trust in You.