Jesus gives his disciples authority to heal and set free

Jesus gives His Apostles a sacred authority. They were able to drive out demons and heal the sick. They also won many converts to Christ by their preaching.

It's interesting to look at this extraordinary charism the Apostles had to act miraculously. It's interesting because we do not see this happen that often today. However, at the beginnings of the Church, it seems that miracles were quite common. It seems that, as the Church grew, miracles in such great numbers were not as necessary for the authentication of the Word of God. The personal lives and witness of believers eventually were sufficient to spread the Gospel without the help of numerous miracles.

This is helpful to understand because we see something similar in our own lives of faith and conversion. Often times, at the beginning of our faith journey, we have many powerful experiences of God's presence. There may be deep consoling spiritual feelings and a clear sense that God is with us. But over time, these feelings can start to disappear and we can wonder where they went or wonder if we have done something wrong. There is an important spiritual lesson here.

As our faith deepens, the spiritual consolations we may receive at the beginning can often fade away because God wants us to love and serve Him out of a more purified faith and love. We should believe and follow Him not because He makes us feel good, but because it is good and right to love and serve Him. This can be a difficult lesson to learn but an essential one.

Reflect, today, upon how deep and sustaining your faith is. Do you know and love God even when things are hard and when He seems far away? Those moments, more than any, are the moments when your personal faith and conversion can grow the strongest.

Secondly, All of the gospels make reference to the twelve disciples that Jesus chose from among the wider group of disciples. They were called to share in his ministry in a special way. They had privileged access to Jesus; they were given much and much was expected of them. When the gospel writers name the twelve and when they come to Judas Iscariot they always refer to him as 'the one who was to betray him'.

The story of Judas reminds us that Jesus' choice of us does not automatically mean our choice of him. Our baptismal calling is to keep on choosing the Lord who has chosen us. Each day we need to commit ourselves to him and to his way, as he committed himself to us forever by his life, death, and resurrection.

Let us pray:

Lord, help my faith in You and my love of You to be deep, stable and strong. Help me to rely upon that faith more than upon any external "miracles" or feelings. Help me to love You first and foremost out of pure love for You.

Jesus, I Trust in You.