

2nd. Sunday in Ordinary Time Sunday January 17, 2021

Well! It's January! Usually, right about now, I would be packing for our winter vacation in the sun. How I love my time away to refresh, recharge and spend time with my husband! To spend the day beside the ocean listening to the sound of the waves crashing against the shoreline always relaxes me. Once in a while, especially on a rainy or cloudy day, we will wander through the local shops to browse the wares and crafts. The shop owners see you in the distance and call out "come and see! Come and see what good deals I have for you today! Just come inside and take a look at my shop!" For those of you who have done this type of vacation and shopping, you know once they get you inside to see what they have to offer, it's hard to leave empty handed!

This Sunday's Gospel reading from John, is one of my personal favourites. "When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see."

The invitation to come and see is really an invitation to come and get to know Jesus. There is nothing harsh or demanding about the invitation. Jesus is saying, come look around, see what I am all about. Put yourself in this story. What do you see? To follow Jesus into his home, the place where he is staying, is to follow him into intimacy, the intimate life of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

How do we respond to the invitation? Henri Nouwen writes in "Following Jesus" there are three things we need to do in order to respond to the invitation: listen, ask and dwell. To listen is to be open minded and listen to those around us, yes, even those that annoy us. To ask is to always be seeking and yearning to know Jesus. Keep asking "Lord, how is it to be with you? I want to follow you but I am not so sure. Keep asking." (page 26) To dwell is to spend time with Jesus. "To follow Jesus you have to be willing to say, "This half hour I am going to dwell with Jesus. I know I will be distracted. I know I will have a hundred thoughts and a million things to do. But I know you love me and invite me, even when I am antsy and anxious. I am going to dwell." (page 27)

This Gospel reading is a great reminder for me of what my mission is. Do I invite others to come and see what God has done in my life? Do I invite others to see what my relationship with Jesus looks like? The invitation of "come and see" is a reminder for me to slow down, spend time with Jesus and just be, or as Nouwen says, dwell. Every day I wake up and ask "Jesus, I don't know how to do this so please take me by the hand and show me." Remember, listen, ask and dwell and you will slowly grow in Jesus.

So, no vacation in the sun this winter! My familiar routine has been totally disrupted! Perhaps this is God's way of calling me into deeper relationship with him. Perhaps I can explore more closely where Jesus is staying. Perhaps I will find myself with more time to dwell.

Reflection by Julie de Gouw, Pastoral Minister

