

June 7, 2009—5pm vigil, 7am, 10am  
Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity—Year B  
Father David Lawrence

Just before he ascended into heaven, Jesus gave his eleven apostles the great commission, he told them to go and baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. But he didn't just tell them to go and baptize but to make disciples and to teach them to observe all the commandments. So the sacrament of baptism isn't just one magical moment that saves me and then I can continue what I was doing before. The sacrament of baptism doesn't just take away original sin and put us in the good graces of God, it certainly does do that, but it also immerses us in the life of the Trinity, that is, it makes us disciples. Baptism gives us a share in God's life and God is very much alive. Baptism is the first step of discipleship.

So what is a disciple? Disciples are followers, they are not by-standers or spectators, they are not just admirers either; they are more, disciples are followers. Disciples get up and follow Jesus. They don't just watch him walk by, they don't just clap for him and praise him, they follow him because they want to be with him and they want to go where he is going.

And I think in our modern TV culture it is a bit more difficult to appreciate Jesus command of discipleship. The TV by nature makes us spectators. TV's don't move, they are just a box or a flat panel that sits there and shoots photons at us. Now of course for centuries before there were TV's there were newspapers and books which were almost as sedentary and just give us a one way information dump. And that's good in moderation. But back in Jesus' time you had to seek out a good teacher to get that much information, you had to get up and walk and go to the synagogue or the temple or the public square. And the teacher who brings the most truth (or sometimes just the most attractive message—give us Barrabas) garnered followers, disciples. Today people are more likely to have a favorite TV channel that is their teacher. And we need to ask ourselves and perhaps even more so people who are not here, what demands does your favorite teacher place on you, where is he or she leading you, does he or she share her life with you?

We know Jesus does. He gives us his whole life in the Eucharist. He leads us to peace and justice in this world and eternal happiness in the world to come. And he demands everything. Take up your cross and follow me. Go and sell all that you have and follow me.

Why would anyone want to follow him? How do we make disciples? Of course we cannot really force people to become disciples. But God is on our side in this endeavor. When God created human beings, he created them for himself, and so there will always be a restlessness until we find him. So we need to show others the truth of his words, the goodness of his way and the beauty of his life. These attract as surely as the law of gravity. And as we share it we become disciples. We want to come to Church on Sunday and we want to keep the commandments. We want to follow Jesus and be with him and so come to share his life with the Father and the Holy Spirit eternally.