

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Mission Hardly Begun Twenty-sixth Week in Ordinary Time Wednesday, September 26, 2018 Prv 30:5-9; **Lk 9:1-6** (Sts. Cosmas and Damian, martyrs) (If we were only to give ourselves totally to God, then we would become ourselves a miracle, and we would produce miracles, and in our wake the world would be transformed, which is of course God's basic plan.)

“They set out and went from village to village proclaiming the Good News and curing diseases everywhere.”

Now this is not the entire purpose of Christ to **cure diseases**, but it was one of the major signs that he performed. **Why did he perform these signs, and why did he empower his apostles to do the same?** Because it reveals the nature of God and the will of God, which is **a will to heal and to save and to redeem and to gather and to comfort**. This will of God is not visible in ordinary life. That is the great and, I would say, even strange fact of life, that the will of God is not visible in ordinary life. God's goodness is not visible. In a sense what is visible is beauty, the beauty of God, because the beauty of God shines through the creation, and we can see the creation is beautiful, **but we can't know the desire of God to heal, to bind up, to gather, to redeem, to bless. That we can't see because human society does not reflect it, by and large.**

Now the whole idea of **Jesus' mission is to reform human society so that it reflects the will of God**, so that anybody born into human society would know by observing society, **by observing people, what God is like**. As it is, then and now, it's not possible.

Now the apostles had no idea what their journey would eventually entail. They went out from village to village, and probably when they were done with the village to village journey, they thought their job was done. Little did they know it had hardly begun. The job, if you want to call it that, **the mission of the Church, has even today hardly begun**. We keep being **set back**—by what? **By the unwillingness of people, including ourselves, to accept this whole mission**. Jesus warned right away at the very beginning there will be those who reject you. **“And as for those**

who do not welcome you, when you leave that town, shake the dust from your feet in testimony against them.” Unfortunately they are many and they are even among us at times.

And sometimes even we ourselves may not accept this real mission from God.

And so the work of even **healing is blunted**. We cannot say that there is anything lacking in the Holy Spirit, but we do notice that the healing of God, the healing touch of God, is not universally healing the entire world. There is still resistance, and **it’s resistance to holiness itself that is the root of the problem**, nothing else. **If we were only to give ourselves totally to God, then we would become ourselves a miracle, and we would produce miracles, and in our wake the world would be transformed, which is of course God’s basic plan**, and God is not going to give up that plan. That was the Opening Prayer of today’s liturgy, which is really a quote from the Letter to Timothy, that **God wills the salvation of everyone, and God is not going to stop his program of salvation**. But **we believers need great patience and endurance** because we are living in a world where many reject it, where many reject God, where there are many who don’t know God. They don’t even know what they are rejecting. **There is still a world shrouded, and we need to bring it to light**. That is our mission.