

Listening and helping others hear God's call

"The foxes have lairs, the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Lk 9:58)

Jesus was responding to someone who said he would follow him wherever he went. Discipleship has a cost, Jesus implied. "He sent them forth to proclaim the reign of God and heal the afflicted. He advised them, 'Take nothing for the journey, neither walking staff nor traveling bag; no bread, no money'" (9:2-3).

These sayings fall under the umbrella of Luke 9:51. "As the time approached when he was to be taken from this world, he firmly resolved to proceed toward Jerusalem ..."

This passage is a turning point in the Gospel of Luke, the point at which Jesus knows his mission will require that he let go of all earthly attachments, all the way to the cross, in order to give himself completely to the will of his Father. Luke reminds us that such detachment is asked of all who would join Jesus on his journey.

Generous detachment

I have always been attracted to the verse, "The foxes have lairs, the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." It describes a way of discipleship with which many are familiar.

Some people are homeless because they have no choice; they reflect the presence of the Lord who became poor for our sake. Some choose to be with the homeless by living simply and fore-



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going attachment to money and property. Some feel the rootlessness of transfer from one place to another because of jobs or family situations.

This time of year, many priests, deacons, and religious women and men experience the tangible de-

mands of discipleship with a change in assignment. I would like to thank them for their witness of faith and love, for their generous detachment after the example of Jesus.

Soon we will publish a list of clergy appointments which become effective during the summer. Sometimes those asked to consider a change are ready, even eager, to do so. Perhaps they have finished the work they set out to do at their current assignment; perhaps they are preparing to enjoy a long-planned retirement.

Other times those asked to change are taken quite off guard because they were not expecting a change, so the thought of being uprooted is very unsettling.

Twists and turns

The demands of Jesus' invitation to discipleship are not hypothetical. Every disciple knows some of the

twists and turns of the road to Jerusalem. The priests who serve our archdiocese certainly do!

Changes of assignment for clergy and religious can be heart-wrenching, because we love our parishioners. Our parishes are our families. It's for the same reason that parishioners experience a loss when their pastor or parochial vicar is transferred. They discover the demands of Christian discipleship, giving up a priest they love, a priest who loves them.

I want to tell you what fine priests we have in our diocese! They work hard, they give of themselves to the

Lord wholeheartedly and they find joy in the priesthood. They deserve our support and prayers because they believe so deeply in their call to the priesthood

and live it so lovingly.

The promotion of vocations to the priesthood has been a priority for the Archdiocese of Seattle for many years, and your prayers and hard work are bearing fruit.

The number of seminarians studying for our archdiocese continues to grow, and the young men coming forward are fine, intelligent, talented and enthusiastic candidates. But we must continue to make vocations a priority, and I ask everyone to do your part in praying to the Lord of the harvest for an increase of vocations. There is no doubt God is calling, and there is no doubt he is asking us to listen and help others listen for his call.

DO YOU HAVE AN INTENTION FOR ARCHBISHOP SARTAIN'S PRAYER LIST?

You may send it to him at Archbishop Sartain's Prayer List, Archdiocese of Seattle, 710 Ninth Ave., Seattle, WA 98104.

Thank you

On Saturday, June 9 I will have the great honor of ordaining Deacon José Alvarez to the priesthood. Born in Mexico, Deacon José's journey to the priesthood began many years ago, and he has prepared well for ordination. I spent an enjoyable afternoon with him recently, and we spoke of his call and his joy at saying "yes" to the Lord.

Thank you, brother priests, for your selfless love of our people. Like the Son of Man, you do not know where you will lay your head as the years go by, and you lovingly "lose yourself" for the sake of the kingdom.

Thank you, deacons, religious women and men, and lay ministers, for your acceptance of the call to serve and your invaluable contribution to our archdiocese.

Thank you, people of the archdiocese, for your love for us and your unfailing love for the Lord.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for taking us along the road to Jerusalem with you. You who had no place to lay your head, be with us wherever discipleship takes us.

The next issue of The Progress will feature our religious women jubilarians and our gratitude for all in religious life.