

13<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday  
June 26, 2022  
“Responding to God”

1 Kgs 19:16...21  
Gal 5:1...18  
Lk 9:51-62

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

At sometime in our life, many of us feel an inward pull to do something different. It might be changing a job or an occupation – It might be beginning a whole new life project – It might even be retiring from a position we held for many years.

If we have not thought through the consequences of the change – we might be surprised. It might be more difficult for us to do what we intended. Moving into a new life-project often means leaving behind things we took for granted. Most probably, we will no longer enjoy some of the things that, formerly, we had.

Furthermore, our family, our loved ones, and our friends might find the change difficult. They might even try to dissuade us from making the change – from doing what we are certain we must do! On the other hand, they might bear anger and resentment toward anyone who tries to thwart us!

The scriptures for today all relate to the changes we must make when we answer a call that God extends to us. God, often, does this more than once in most people’s lives. Elijah had been complaining to God about his role as God’s prophet. He wanted out. He had suffered more than he ever anticipated. He had incurred the wrath of powerful leaders – and was a hunted man!

However, Elijah seems reluctant to accept Elisha as his successor. He seems hesitant to give up the mantle of prophecy. As a disclaimer, he even tells Elisha to go back – to continue whatever he had been doing!

Nevertheless, Elisha totally accepted this call from God that came through Elijah. He divested himself from all those things that could hinder his choice. He said his final “goodbyes” – He killed his source of income – and he fed the hungry poor with the oxen he would no longer need!

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus must go to Jerusalem and face what will await him there. He knows that his arrival will result in his eventual suffering and death. His disciples have no idea of all that will transpire in Jerusalem. They still believe that Jesus is a Messiah of the political order. He will bring freedom from Roman domination and restore Israel to its long-lost glory!

Consequently, when the Samaritans refuse Jesus their hospitality, the disciples ask for their destruction. The Samaritans are interfering with their plans for Jesus! And Jesus had to rebuke his disciples!

St. Luke also mentions three people who want to follow Jesus – Yet, they might not be called by God. So, Jesus teaches three truths that each of us must face when answering God's call to make a change. The first, is that we might not enjoy the comforts we thought were essential in our lives. The second, is that we must never let the demands of the culture keep us from doing what we must do. The third, is never to look back at our former life with nostalgia or regret!

Finally, St. Paul tells us how we are to respond to whatever God asks of us. We are to respond in true freedom – motivated by love. We, each, have been created and embraced by a God of Love. We have been called to an eternal life of peace and joy and love in God's presence.

Therefore, if we truly love God in return, we will hold nothing back. Those who keep the Law of God because they fear eternal punishment – are missing the point. They are focused upon the minimum! If we truly love God, we will go much further than what the Law demands. We will be the best we can be in every situation and in every circumstance – All because we love God and would never dishonor Him by breaking any of the Commandments. For these are the lines we must never cross!

And so, Brothers and Sisters, let us pray that we never refuse whatever new endeavor  
that God may be asking of us –  
May we never be an obstacle to another's answer to their own call –  
And may we always look forward to the joy and the love  
in that Kingdom God has promised through Jesus!

Amen.

June 26, 2022

Msgr. Russell G. Terra