

January 2025

Reflection

### Easy Apostleship

The opening sentence of today's Gospel makes apostleship sound easy: Jesus "summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him." He did this atop some local mountain, a spot whose theatrical ambience intensified the moment. Jesus invited. People responded. That was that. Easy.

Jesus had already enchanted these followers with his character and his message. Then they learned the electrifying news that he wanted some of them for something more.

I sometimes hear the invitation to do something more, but the news is not always electrifying. I don't often give the immediate response Jesus received, "they came to him."

Pope Francis declares in his Apostolic Letter *Desiderio desideravi* that the disciples had been drawn to the Last Supper by Jesus' burning desire to eat with them (4). Before we arrive at the Eucharist today, Jesus has already wanted us there. He desires us with a great desire.

At the Eucharist, Jesus desires to feed us, but he never relinquishes his earlier desire: he wants apostles. He'll feed them with his Word and send them on their way.

No one objected that day on the mountain. Those invited simply came to Jesus.

The risen Christ still wants apostles. What does he ask of you? Do you trust he will give you the strength you need? Will people say of you what Mark says of the apostles: "They came to him"? Easy.

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