

Companions on a common journey

Biblical texts

- Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come. So he travelled throughout Galilee. Mc 1:38
- Paul and his companions travelled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia... During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." Apg 16:6.9
- While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them. Lc24:15

Reflections

Jesus began his mission in the town of Capernaum. The way he proclaimed the coming of God's kingdom and his power of healing the sick made him known everywhere overnight. Large crowds came from everywhere to see him. Jesus would have had enough work to do in Capernaum for the rest of his life. But was that what the Father wanted? He spent a whole night in a cave in prayer and the call of his Father was to go to all the villages to preach his message.

Jesus was always on the road, but never alone. He moved around with a crowd of disciples. There was no set plan. They did not know where they would be tomorrow.

Jesus let himself be guided by the spirit, and his small community trusted him enough to follow him.

Over the centuries, the church settled down, organized itself locally into parishes and dioceses, founded monasteries, built schools and hospitals, promoted art and created a legal system. These institutions have done an incredible amount of good, changing society for the better. But the Church became powerful, too powerful, and power corrupts. It believed it was "the perfect society" and needed no change, while the world around it was changing dramatically. The Church seemed to become like a fossil of bygone times.

Thank God, the Second Vatican Council gave us another image of the Church: "the pilgrim people of God," a community that has set out, looking forward, always on the way like Jesus with his disciples. He was always on the road, but never alone. He moved around with a crowd of disciples. There was no set plan. They did not know where they would be tomorrow; Jesus let himself be led by the spirit and his small community followed him trustingly.

In the Synodal Process the whole Church wants to set out on a journey. The goal is neither to create an immediate pastoral programme nor to reinvent the Church. It is a long, difficult journey and we do not know where the Spirit will lead us. Like any journey, it begins with a first step, with the question what the Spirit and our world ask of us now. All the proposals of the local churches will flow into a world synod in 2023.



Prayer

*Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet;
I do not ask to see the distant scene;
one step enough for me.!*

Cardinal John Henry Newman

African proverb

Nunya, adidoe, asi metunee O. (Akan: Ghana)
„Wisdom is like a baobab, alone no one can embrace it.

