

Fr. John Sassani
Homily Given on July 12, 2009
Fifteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time
Liturgical Year B

About a year ago, I was walking through the property when I met two men, one dressed as a priest and one in regular clothes. The priest spoke first: "Father, do you need to repent?" My first thought was "Who does he think he is?" My second was "How does he know me so well?" As we continued in conversation, I discovered that the two are members of a new religious order. They are taking Jesus very seriously and literally – traveling all over, two by two, calling people to conversion. They had credentials but carried no money, only phone cards. We talked for a while longer, I gave them a donation, and off they went.

I remembered this event when I first looked at this Sunday's Gospel. I'm not sure this Gospel is meant to be taken completely literally, but I am confident it is meant to be taken seriously.

What does this look like? The disciples are sent out two by two, with sandals and a staff – they will be surefooted. They are to travel light on everything else – they will be vulnerable. The disciples are sent out in surefooted vulnerability.

Currently most of us are quite familiar with vulnerability, especially the financial kind. Some of us are familiar with health vulnerability...opportunity vulnerability...since 2001, security vulnerability...spiritual vulnerability. These are vulnerabilities we *suffer*. Christ is calling us to *choose* to be vulnerable *with Him*: to be a person who relies on Him, to be a person who lets Him set the course and direction of our lives rather than being the master of our own destiny.

Christ provides us with surefootedness in our vulnerability. He is our companion but calls us to have faith friends as well. Christ gives us surefootedness through prayer, as we experience a deepening dependence on Him. He gives us people in our lives to share our faith with us for encouragement and mutual growth. And He provides resources for ourselves and for others, so that those who are more needy than ourselves can experience the companionship of Christ in their need and become more surefooted themselves.

Today, Christ comes to us, not in power and majesty, but in the breakable, spillable gifts of bread and wine, which render His broken Body and spilled Blood tangibly available to us in our vulnerability, so that by His food and drink we might become more surefooted to be companions for those more vulnerable than ourselves.