

Mark 6: 6-13

Then Jesus went about among the villages teaching. ⁷He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; ⁹but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. ¹⁰He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. ¹¹If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' ¹²So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. ¹³They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Commentary: Jesus calls the twelve and sends them out two by two. What are they called and sent to do? They are given authority to cast out demonic spirits and heal the sick. But with the healing there is also a message for the spirit: 'They went out and proclaimed that all should repent.' The healing of the body and the spirit cannot be separated in Jesus' ministry. Indeed, the healing of the body is a visible pointer to the deeper healing of the spirit. Repentance is the first and primary step in this inner healing. Repentance clears out the baggage, the demons within us. It forces us to confront and bring to the surface that which imprisons our spirits within: the shame of guilt, regret, despair, judgement, blame and failure. Once this is out in the open, there is room for something else to take root and grow within us, the life and spirit of Jesus - divine love.

Are you fulfilling your spiritual vocation in life? Are you able to bring Christ's healing presence to those around you, a presence that has first found a home in your spirit?

In this season of Covid-19, it is easy to identify the healers with those on the front lines of the battle in hospitals and in research, racing to find a vaccine. But how are we all called to be healers - of mind and spirit, which also involve the body as we are whole persons? We are all called to such a ministry. How is it that we must first heal before God in order to become healers for others? How is it that our own healing also happens as we are involved with others on a healing journey? How is it that we clear out the baggage in us that keeps us chained and imprisoned in spiritual sickness that afflicts not only us but all who come into contact with us? Until we come to understand healing in much more comprehensive terms, we will never find our way as persons within a society that has been sick before Covid-19 came onto the scene.

Prayer: Healing God, what is the sickness for which I need healing? How are you calling me in this season of Covid-19, to become a healing presence for the world around me? How is it that I have disconnected my body from my mind and spirit which also need exorcism healing of the demons that can and do imprison me in ways others do not see and I can easily hide? Don't let me off the hook, O God. Make this time a healing time for me... Amen.