



Luke 14:25-33

25 Great crowds accompanied Jesus on his way and he turned and spoke to them. **26** 'If any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple. **27** Anyone who does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

28 'And indeed, which of you here, intending to build a tower, would not first sit down and work out the cost to see if he had enough to complete it? **29** Otherwise, if he laid the foundation and then found himself unable to finish the work, the onlookers would all start making fun of him and saying, **30** "Here is a man who started to build and was unable to finish." **31** Or again, what king marching to war against another king would not first sit down and consider whether with ten thousand men he could stand up to the other who advanced against him with twenty thousand? **32** If not, then while the other king was still a long way off, he would send envoys to sue for peace. **33** So in the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions.'

Other readings: Wisdom 9:13-18 Psalm 89 (90) Philemon 9-10,12-17

The start of this gospel reading should remind us that Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem. Luke tells us that many people were willing to follow him. His journey from Galilee to Jerusalem began in chapter 9. It is a journey to face the cross and is filled with teaching for those who are willing to take up their crosses as disciples of Jesus.

Once again Jesus uses the stark language of the prophets. To hate one's closest relatives should not be interpreted literally, but in the sense of preferring nothing and nobody to following Jesus.

The second section of the gospel concerns prudence. Jesus tells two short parables, about the man building the tower, and another about a king going to war. Discipleship involves both the heart and the mind. We need to count the cost of discipleship. There is an apparent contradiction here for the passage ends with another radical statement of Jesus: 'None of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions.' Each person must calculate the cost and give what God inspires through heart and mind. God does not demand what is impossible for a person to give. Detachment is the key.

The first reading praises the gift of Wisdom, which comes from God. Jesus is this true Wisdom, who guides, inspires and challenges us on the road to the fullness of life.

Do I manage to put God above all else in my life?

Do I use my intelligence to make decisions about discipleship?

Let us pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide our detachment to generosity.

Let us pray for courage in following Jesus to Jerusalem, to the cross and to new life.