

JULY 10 2025 FATHER HENK VAN MEIJEL

So yesterday, Jesus appoints the Twelve to be sent out to proclaim the good news. Today, they receive the final instructions — instructions to literally trust in God's providence.

Don't take any money with you, don't take any extra clothing with you. You trust that people will give you what you need.

This is so important in each of our own lives, especially in our Western culture where we are so wealthy and tend to rely on our own resources. This reliance on ourselves often keeps us from deepening our relationship with God. If I have all my resources and can take care of myself, I don't really need God. But if I have nothing, then I have to rely on God.

The disciples are missioned to go out and spread the good news. If you are welcomed, great — you stay there. If not, shake the dust off your pants and boots and carry on.

As they go out to evangelize, it's also for them to receive the good news of God, to see how God takes care of us.

In my own Jesuit formation, it is part of our journey to be sent out just like the Apostles, to have nothing with you. I was sent out in my own pilgrimage in 2007. I walked out the front door for 30 days with a bag of peanuts, a sleeping bag, and a little backpack with some fresh clothes — and that was it.

I was on the road, relying on God's providence. I walked across northern Minnesota from church to church. Sometimes I was welcomed, sometimes I was not — even in our own churches. I never said who I was though. It's amazing how that works.

But it is all about relying on God's providence. And God will supply.

This year, the Jesuit Archives in Montreal — if you ever come to Montreal — have an exhibition about pilgrimages. It shows all the novices who went out on pilgrimage during their formation. It's quite interesting.

The Jesuits have been back in Canada since about 1840, and there are several thousand of us who have done such pilgrimages, all relying on God's providence.

Switching a bit, today we also had the reading from Genesis about Joseph. Joseph tricks his brothers into becoming honest after they had abandoned him and sold him as a slave to the Egyptians.

How the tables have turned! Again, we see God's providence. God brings good out of bad. Joseph teaches his brothers a lesson about how God works — how God worked in his life, and also in theirs.

Joseph could have easily said, "You miserable little brothers, I'm going to kill all of you." But he didn't. He had mercy, and they came to an understanding.

It is so important to realize how God works through all of our human messiness, how things fall into place. We don't need to get excited or overly anxious about the latest calamity in our families or whatever difficulties arise.

God, in salvation history, continues to work through these things. God always tries to bring good out of bad. We just have to do our part, endure when things are not going well, and accept.

This is something we each have to learn in our own lives: to trust in God's providence.

Today, also on the universal calendar for the Church, we remember Blessed Pacificus. Blessed Pacificus was a Franciscan, one of the early followers of Saint Francis of Assisi.

He was a poet and an entertainer, working in the courts of emperors Henry VI and Frederick II. He had all the worldly things he wanted.

Yet, when he met Saint Francis, everything changed. All of it meant nothing to him. He became a pilgrim as a Franciscan, leaving all his worldly goods behind.

He was also a witness to the stigmata that Saint Francis received and was sent out on mission to France, relying on God's providence.

He learned quickly how God provides whatever we need. But sometimes, we have to step out of the way, not rely on our own resources, and trust in a God who knows what we need.

God knows what is good for us. God knows best — not us. I don't know what's best for myself, but God does.

Amen.