

OCTOBER 1 2025 FATHER GUSTAVE INEZA

"Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

There is a story I once heard from a Canadian-Dominican friar I met in Cairo in Egypt. After a long and serious theological conversation between him and another brother, he told to the whole community, "Did you hear on the radio that they found the stone which the Son of Man did not have to lay His head on?"

Because some versions of the Gospel say that the Son of Man does not have a stone on which to lay His head. So, he said that joke, "Did you hear on the radio that they found the stone which the Son of Man did not have to lay His head on?"

Some of us were puzzled, but some, I remember, were so joyful that that stone was discovered. But how can they find that stone if it did not exist in the first place? So, the joke, humorous as it was, strikes at the heart of today's gospel.

Jesus says, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Jesus reveals to us a radical poverty, a radical detachment, and an uncompromising demand that comes with discipleship.

Following Christ is not about securing a place of comfort or privilege. It is about willing to, about a willingness to walk with Him into uncertainty, into vulnerability, and into radical trust in God.

To understand today's passage, we must recall the sin just before it. Jesus had been rejected by a Samaritan town. His disciples, indignant at the insult, immediately ask, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from Heaven and consume them?"

Their instinct was one of violence, domination, and judgment. They believed that because they were following Jesus, they had the right to condemn others. But Jesus rebukes them. He makes it clear that discipleship is not about wielding power or deciding who is worthy. It is about humility, service, and leaving judgment to God alone.

The first man in today's gospel is one of the three encounters, and each person wants to follow Jesus. Among the three encounters, none has truly understood the demands of discipleship.

So, the first man makes a bold declaration: "I will follow You wherever You go." His words sound generous and committed. They are beautiful, but Jesus responds with a sober warning, "Foxes have holes and birds of air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

Jesus reminds him as He reminds us that discipleship comes at a cost. To follow Christ means accepting insecurity, discomfort and sacrifice. It is not a path of privilege, but of poverty.

In our modern world, where security and comfort are often our highest goals, this teaching is radical. How is it we want faith to fit into our schedules, our plans, our careers, our lifestyles? But Christ warns us that the path of discipleship will unsettle us, challenge us, and take us out of our comfort zones.

The second person desires to follow Jesus, but asks permission to first bury his father. This seems like a reasonable request. Who would refuse to such a person that request? Yet Jesus replies, "Let the dead bury their dead, but as for you, go and proclaim the Kingdom of God."

Jesus' point is not to belittle family duties or human grief. Rather, He stresses the urgency of God's call. There are moments in life when we must choose decisively for the kingdom. Delay, even for seemingly good reasons, can become a way of postponing conversion.

The gospel teaches us that the mission of Christ is so vital, so urgent, that it cannot be endlessly postponed. How many times do we say, "I will commit to prayer when I'm less busy." "I will serve the poor once I have more resources." "I will forgive that person later when I feel ready." Yet, Jesus calls us now in this moment. The kingdom cannot wait

The third person is willing to follow, but asks to first say goodbye to family. And Jesus answers, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God."

It is a vivid image. A farmer plowing a field cannot look backward without making crooked lines. Discipleship requires focus, perseverance, and fidelity. To follow Christ means to look forward, not backwards.

If we are always longing for the past, our old habits, our old securities, our old traditions, sometimes our old sayings, we cannot walk firmly towards the Kingdom.

So, brothers and sisters, today's gospel confronts us with three great temptations in our walk with Christ: the desire for comfort, the temptation to delay, and the habit of looking backwards.

We live in a world where wealth, security, and possessions are considered the measure of success. Yet these pursuits often come at the expense of others. It's more luxury for us may mean immense suffering for someone else across the globe.

So, our discipleship challenges us to see the reality and to live with the freedom that does not cling to possessions, but seeks the good of others

One example of St. Therese of Lisieux, or also known as St. Therese of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, who understood discipleship in simple, yet profound terms. Her teaching known as the "Little Way" offered the Church a deep spiritual insight, which led Pope John Paul II to declare her a Doctor of the Church.

Jesus reminds us that following Him is not about a secure nest or a comfortable home, but about trusting God's providence. It is not about waiting until tomorrow, but acting today.

That Canadian friar's joke about Jesus not having, about finding the stone which the Son of Man did not have to lay His head on, it makes us laugh, but it also unsettles us. The Son of Man embraces a life of radical poverty, radical detachment, radical trust. And He invites us to do the same.

So, brothers and sisters, let us ask ourselves, why are we clinging to comfort instead of following Christ? Why are we delaying instead of deciding? Why are we looking back instead of moving forward?

May the Lord grant us the courage to walk with Him if and when the path is uncertain, if and when the cost is high, if and when the world offers easy alternatives. For inferring Him without hesitation, without excuses and without turning back, we discover no loss. Not loss, but true freedom and life in abundance.

Amen.