



**14th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)
HOMILY**

**By the Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB
Archbishop of Perth**

St Mary's Cathedral
Sunday 3 July, 2016

As I mentioned at the beginning of our Mass this morning, today we are being invited to weave together a number of different and very important themes.

Firstly, we have the presence of a significant number of people who have gathered to celebrate NAIDOC week and to bring that celebration into the heart of the Catholic community. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, this week is an opportunity to rejoice in their culture, to thank God for the many gifts He has given to them over so many thousands of years here in this country, to acknowledge and mourn for what has been lost and what has been suffered, and to remind all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, of the need for reconciliation and healing.

Your presence here today is a little like the presence of the 72 disciples of this morning's Gospel, who were called by the Lord and sent by Him to speak to His people of all that He was asking of them. The Word of the Lord you speak to us today by your presence will be symbolised in the message stick which we will bring to the altar during the presentation of the gifts.

We also have a large number of young people who are here to be commissioned as World Youth Day pilgrims. Soon, they will be leaving for their pilgrimage to Krakow in Poland where they will encounter hundreds of thousands, and possibly some millions, of young people from all around the world who are passionate about their faith, committed to the Church, eager to meet and listen to Pope Francis, and ready to take up more fully the call to be true disciples of the Lord. You, too, are like the 72 disciples of today's Gospel. The Lord has called you here this morning, he is calling you to be with Him in Poland, and He is preparing to send you out on a mission.

For our Indigenous brothers and sisters and those who are supporting them, and for our young people preparing to set out on their pilgrimage, I hope this morning's Mass will be a sign of the Church's interest in you and a guarantee of the prayers which will accompany you in the days and weeks ahead.

Of course, this morning's Gospel speaks not just to our Aboriginal brothers and sisters and to our young pilgrims: it speaks to every one of us. It is a reminder to us that the privilege and the task of carrying Jesus to the people of our own time and place doesn't just belong to the chosen few, represented by the 12 apostles in the Gospel tradition. In our own time, those chosen few might be thought of, first of all, as the bishops and priests, as the deacons, as the religious sisters and brothers, and as those who, in various ways, have a formal role in the Church. No, the 72 disciples mentioned in today's Gospel might be thought of as representing every person who has received



the extraordinary gift of Baptism and who, by that Baptism, has become a living and vital part of the living body of Christ, the community of faith which we call the Church. In other words, in a certain sense, those 72 disciples represent all of us.

And what is it that Jesus asks of us? He asks us not to close ourselves in our own comfortable worlds but, rather, to be ready to carry what Pope Francis would call the joy of the Gospel to everyone we meet. We should carry it in our minds, carry it in our hearts, carry it on our faces. And, each in our own way according to the realities of our own particular situation, we should, as Jesus reminds us in today's Gospel, do so in a simple way, making sure that it is peace we bring into people's lives rather than turmoil and division.

Of course, it is as disciples of Jesus that we are being sent. It is His message we are asked to share, His values we are called to uphold and promote, His spirit of compassion, mercy, and forgiveness we are asked to communicate, both by what we say and by what we do. The more we know Him, and the more deeply we allow Him to live in us, the more powerful and life-changing will be our presence in the lives of those we encounter, in our families, among our friends and in the wider circle of people we meet each day.

It will not always be easy. Jesus, in today's Gospel, warns the 72 that, while they seek only to bring peace and the joy of the Gospel, these gifts will not always be accepted. All we can do is offer what we have received, leaving it to the Lord to work in the hearts of His people, gently leading them to an acceptance of the gifts He is offering. We can do the sowing but only God can ensure that the seeds take root and grow.

At times, like St Paul in today's second reading, we will be very conscious that we are carrying in our own bodies, and also in our minds and hearts, the marks of the suffering and death of the Lord. It will often be the case that the Good News we offer to others in the Lord's name will not be seen by them as Good News but as something which threatens their comfortable existence and asks more of them than they really want to give. Jesus Himself experienced this in the rejection by so many people of His own message of life and hope. As disciples of Jesus, we must expect the same.

Our fidelity, however, especially in the face of difficulties and struggles, will ensure, in the words of today's Gospel, that "our names will be written in heaven". We reach out to others with the Good News of the Gospel because it has been, and remains, good news for us. In the end, it is because we live our lives in the knowledge of God's love and care for us, and because we remain united with Him in and through our life within the community of the Church, that we have the gift of peace which the Lord then asks us to share with others.

May our celebration of the Eucharist today, and our welcoming of the Lord Jesus into our lives through our reception of Holy Communion, deepen that gift of peace and strengthen our determination to share that gift with all those we meet.