

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Jul 11th 2013

Jesus said to his apostles: "As you go make this proclamation: 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

All the Gospels testify that the Kingdom of heaven is "at hand" in Jesus.

Today's Gospel testifies that the Kingdom of heaven is also "at hand" in Jesus' disciples. Jesus commissions his apostles to take his place as proclaimers and agents of this Kingdom of heaven.

And the Kingdom of heaven is present in us!

Every Christian receives the Spirit of Jesus through faith and baptism. This indwelling of the Holy Spirit constitutes us as the Body of Christ in our world. Consequently our Spirit-inspired words and actions become a continuing presence of Jesus in our world. We are today's proclaimers and agents of the Kingdom of heaven! Through the eyes of faith we recognize God's Kingdom breaking forth in our Spirit-filled actions of justice, love and service in our families, workplaces, communities, nation.

And this Kingdom of Heaven was present in St. Benedict (480-550) whose feast we celebrate today. The Spirit of Jesus worked through Benedict to create religious communities of consecrated men and women who would establish thousands of monasteries and bring Jesus' presence to all parts of the known world. It would be hard to name another person in Christian history whose influence for the Kingdom of heaven is greater.

In the only prayer Jesus ever taught his disciples he teaches them to pray for the daily coming of this Kingdom on earth: "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"!

Our dignity as Christians is to be proclaimers and witnesses of the Kingdom of heaven!

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