

Your Way to Serve

Acts 6:1–15

Each day, it's important to take your bearings. Where are you today? In the Easter season, in the scriptures, in your daily life, in your very self? Spend a few minutes getting your bearings for the day.

Let's briefly examine where we are in the Book of Acts and then begin our day with a prayer for deliverance—for ourselves, our fraternity brothers, and all Exodus Men.

You are with the growing community in Jerusalem. The first Christian community remains a model, as they prayed, followed the apostles' teaching, served the poor, and celebrated in their homes. We are seeking to enter into the experience of the resurrection with them and to join in their mission as witnesses.

Pray that the Lord grants deliverance to you, your family, and your fraternity.

Pray for freedom for all men in Exodus, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy his consolations. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

A Reading from the Book of Acts

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the Twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

And Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Then

they secretly instigated men, who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Reflection

God has called each one of us to some definite kind of service. He has given us particular graces and the power to perform this work.

In today's reading from Acts, we see that the apostles must stay true to their primary service of spreading the message of Christ. Lest the apostles get distracted from their call to preach the good news, they select others to serve and take care of the widows and those in need. These men, deacons (literally, servants), become extensions of the apostles' ministry, which embraces the works of charity.

We cannot separate the witness of words from the witness of actions. One of the first deacons, Stephen, was immediately called from the work of setting tables to witness in the public square. Stephen does not confound his opponents through his own wisdom but through his angelic approach. He radiated the Spirit of Christ, which guided him in what to say, just as Jesus had promised.

How are you called to serve? Like the first deacons, it is important to make ourselves available to the Church to serve others. Our path depends on our disposition, skills, and, ultimately, God's call for us. Spend time in prayer, focusing on God's call and how you are responding.

Week 2 Action Items

Build your new prayer routine.

Try a Trappist or monastic beer for celebration.

Keep your fraternity strong.

Mark Reading as Complete