

SJTI Homily—9 May 2017

Texts: Acts 11:19-26
John 10:22-30

Introduction

We instantly respond to our names: Joseph, Precious, Thabo, Anacletta. If there are two or more people with the same name in the room we say “which one?”

The reading from Acts tells us that it was in Antioch (Syria) that the disciples were first called “Christians”.

The Name “Christian”

Some men have this name, which is interesting.

Africa: “the Christians” in a village, a town—a separate group

Before Vatican II: emphasis on Catholic

Now: Catholic Christian

Being a Disciple named “Christian”

Disciple: follower

Early Christian community: few in the beginning but they stood out—“See how these Christians love one another”

Responding to a call: “I have called you by your name, you are mine” (IS 43:1).

Jesus: many instructions to those who wanted to follow him:

Rich young man—leave your wealth: too hard

The cross and suffering (apostles did not want to hear this), eg Peter’s protest

Service: not lording over others—washing of the feet

Beatitudes—describes the disciple

Matthew 25: re poor, in need—this is what disciples do

Radical discipleship

South Africa: radical economic transformation

Christians: radical discipleship--“to the roots”

How do we know we are faithful disciples?

John’s Gospel today: “The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice. I know them and they follow me.”

Listening: prayer of the heart, reading the signs of the times—Church (Francis and the poor), Africa: poverty and opportunity re young people (50% under 18), world: migration, populism, radical selfishness

Response

If we were with Jesus in Galilee, etc how would we have responded?

Today?

Listening to the voice of Christ? What do we hear? Loudly? Strongly? Two stations at once?

Prayer: joy and delight that Christ calls **our name as disciples**.

Conclusion

We are called by name.

We respond: yes

Then we act.

How?

