

## Sermon Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026

He called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority

It is thought-provoking to consider that of the twelve Apostles not so many names come easily to mind.

We have the four Evangelists

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

But these are remembered because of Gospel titles, and not particular actions.

There is of course St Peter, who gets so much wrong.

“you will deny me three times”

“how many times must I forgive”

“you will never wash my feet”

Being a disciple of Christ Jesus

Is not about success

It is not even about status

Not even places on the right hand or the left hand

To be a disciple of Jesus is much more than success

It is more profound

It is more difficult

Legend has it that most of the twelve disciple were killed for their beliefs

They were martyrs

It was four hundred years before the church was accepted

Ridiculed, tortured, confronting established beliefs

When they went to their deaths

There will have been no evidence of their triumph

Thus it was not about success

It was not about status

It was more profound

It was more difficult

At the moment in the western Church

Throughout Europe

Throughout England

Our faith is ridiculed  
Our community confronting the general sense of the individual  
Our faith confronting the general sense of atheistic despair.

When we are categorised under the strange title religious  
We are considered slightly odd, or misguided.

We  
You and me  
Are the exception to the rule

What is more we are becoming more isolated

Strangely this brings us closer to those who have died for their faith  
It is easier to practice religious belief in an atmosphere of acceptance  
Even in conflict there are passions raised in the response to abuse  
But in apathy  
In a general atmosphere of indifference  
Then proclaiming a belief in anything demands deep integrity

The twelve disciples were chosen  
You are chosen to witness in this faithless period of western history  
The twelve disciples got things wrong but remained faithful  
You, we, make mistakes but cling on to our traditions  
The twelve disciples served  
You are serving, if only by being here  
And defying the popular notions of our mixed up society

You the 21<sup>st</sup> Century disciples are precious

You the witness to the simple celebration of faith in this day are essential

Your name

My name

Will probably be forgotten

But it is not about success

It is not about status

It is more profound

It is more difficult

And it is more beautiful to think

That generations will speak of the love and forgiveness of God

Because you remained faithful