



An Extraordinary Calling for Ordinary People

Using scriptures from the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, Apostle (Jan. 25)

Mark 16:15-18
Acts 9:1-22



The calling in Mark 16:15-18 — "Go out to all the world, and tell the Good News" — seems more appropriate today than when Jesus first said it, thanks to the Internet. Almost daily I sit in a small corner of my house in Florida sharing the Good News with people all around the world. Even when I sleep, my calling is fulfilled on-stop through the Good News Ministries website.

I never imagined having such an extraordinary ministry when I said yes to God's call, in 1977, to become a Catholic. Or in 1982 when I became a published writer for his kingdom. Or in the mid-80s when I designed secular ads, which developed skills that later designed Good News web-pages. I never imagined during Public Speaking Class in high school (ancient days) that God would eventually call me to go into all the world via downloadable MP3s.

I am just an ordinary person. God, however, is quite extraordinary, and he does extraordinary works with ordinary people.

Judas and Ananias from Acts 9:1-22 were ordinary guys, yet they played a very important role in Church development because they treated a terrible persecutor with extraordinary kindness.

First, Judas opened his home in an ordinary gesture of hospitality for a very extraordinary reason, risking everything for a man who had been an aggressive enemy of Christianity.

Then, while Ananias was having a nice, ordinary prayer time, Jesus appeared to him in a vision and said: "I want you to go to Straight Street on the other side of town, to the house of Judas. He's got a visitor there and I want you to minister to him."

"Sure. How do you want me to help him?" replied Ananias.

"His eyes have been blinded, and I want you to lay hands on him to restore his sight."

Ananias was very inadequate for this task, but he'd already seen enough miracles to know that Jesus would make it possible.

"No problem," he said. "You've used me to heal people before."

"Yes, but the man I want you to heal is Saul of Tarsus."

"No! You can't mean that! This man is surely here to arrest us Christians! You can't be serious."

"Go!" Jesus commanded. And Ananias went.

Judas and Ananias are never mentioned in scripture again. And yet, what they did made a huge impact on the whole world, even to this day. They helped to launch Paul into one of the most powerful ministries of evangelization of all time.

What kind of an impact are you willing to make as an ordinary person responding to God's extraordinary call?