

Mark 3:13-19**The Apostles: Unity & Diversity****Individuals**

I want to introduce to you the apostles of Jesus in two ways.

The first is how they are individuals.

Jesus chose these people individually.

Just like each one of us with our lives and our stories, they are individuals.

I want you to know who they are.

Icons

All Apostles will hold scrolls of apostleship if they do not hold a book.

Simon Peter: Renamed by Jesus to Peter (meaning rock), his original name was *Simon bar Jonah*,^[Mk 3:16] was a fisherman from the Bethsaida "of Galilee"^[Jn 1:44], cf. Jn 12:21. Also known as Simon bar Jochanan (Aram.), Cephas (Aram.). Crucified upside-down in Rome c. AD 64. His icon will have short curly hair, scroll (his epistles) and he may wear keys.

James, son of Zebedee: The brother of John. Was beheaded in AD 44, first of the Twelve to die (since the addition of Matthias). His icon has short dark hair and beard as he died young.

John: The brother of James. Jesus named both of them *Bo-aner'ges*, which means "sons of thunder".^[Mk 3:17] No biblical record of death, he is believed to have died of natural causes due to old age. His icon has a white beard, older, high forehead, open book (his Gospel) and he may have an eagle (his Gospel). He is known as "The Theologian."

Andrew: The brother of Simon/Peter, a Bethsaida fisherman, and a former disciple of John the Baptist. Was crucified upon a diagonal or X-shaped cross. His icon will have long white straggly hair & beard. It may have a diagonal cross.

Philip: From the Bethsaida of Galilee.^{[Jn 1:44] [12:21]} Crucified in AD 54. His icon is one of a beardless youth similar to Thomas.

Bartholomew, son of Talemai; usually identified with **Nathanael**, who is mentioned in Jn 1:45-51. Was flayed alive (skinned) and then beheaded; some sources locate his death at Derbend on the Caspian Sea. His icon has short hair & beard.

Matthew: The tax collector. The similarity between Mt 9:9-10, Mk 2:14-15 and Lu 5:27-29 may indicate that Matthew was also known as Levi. Killed by an axe in AD 60. His Icon has short hair, a curly beard, an open book (his Gospel) and he be with a winged figure (his gospel).

Thomas: *Judas Thomas Didymus* - Aramaic *T'oma'* = twin, and Greek *Didymos* = twin. Doubting Thomas. Killed by a spear in Mylapore, Madras, India in AD 72. His icon is beardless like Philip with a scroll or his confession in his hands.

James, son of Alphaeus: Generally identified with "James the Less", and also identified by Roman Catholics with "James the Just". Stoned at age 90 then clubbed to death. His icon has wavy hair and sometimes a pointed beard.

Thaddeus: In some manuscripts of Matthew, the name "Lebbaeus" occurs in this place. Thaddeus is traditionally identified with **Jude/Judas (son of James)** and with **Levi**. Crucified. Curly Brown hair with some white.

Simon the Zealot: Some have identified him with Simeon of Jerusalem. Crucified AD 74. His icon has grey curly hair & beard with a high forehead.

Judas Iscariot: The disciple who later betrayed Jesus. ^[Mk 3:19] The name Iscariot may refer to the Judaean towns of Kerioth or to the sicarii (Jewish nationalist insurrectionists), or to Issachar. Also referred to as "Judas, the son of Simon." ^{"In 6:71" [13:26]} He was replaced by Matthias as an apostle shortly after Jesus' resurrection. Judas Iscariot, according to Matthew, hanged himself after betraying Jesus. In Acts, he is described as falling in a field and bursting open. Apologists explain this apparent discrepancy by presuming that he decayed on the tree resulting in a bloating with gas and a weakening of the skin. Then when he was let down from the tree he burst open upon impact. A third account by Papias records Judas "walking the world", his body having become swollen before being crushed by a chariot." He is not deserving on an icon as betrayer. He does appear in the icons of the last supper and the betrayal as a beardless youth.

Individuals II

It is important for us to not only know that we are individuals
but essential that we see one another as individuals.

There is a reason why we ask you to talk to one another.

Why we program a conversation into our service.

Why you should share your story.

It is only by listening to each other and valuing each other that we see how God
sees us.

We need to learn to take an interest in one another.

If you only see the outside of a person, you become shallow yourself.

Friendship and Conversation are an art.

Authentic interest in other people is not natural to us.

We can pretend for business or manipulation

but to do it just for the other is an incredible gift.

Exercise: Getting to know Someone

Simple introduction of name, where you are from, what you do.

What was your saddest moment in the recent past?

What was your happiest moment in the recent past?

Unity in Diversity

I also want you to get to know the apostles as a group.

da Vinci's *The Last Supper*

Looking across the picture from left to right:

- **Bartholomew, James Minor and Andrew** form a group of three. All are aghast, Andrew to the point of holding his hands up in a "stop!" gesture.
- **Judas, Peter and John** form the next group of three. Judas, you will note, has his face in shadow and is clutching a small bag (of silver?). Peter is visibly angry and a John seems about to swoon.
- **Christ** is the calm in the midst of the storm.
- **Thomas, James Major and Philip** are next. Thomas is clearly agitated, James Major stunned and Philip seems to be seeking clarification.
- **Matthew, Thaddeus and Simon** comprise the last group of three figures. It appears that, when a situation turns ugly, Simon is the "go to" guy for explanations.

Diversity

The apostles were really a mixed bag.

They had similarities in being men (although Jesus had female disciples too),

Jewish, were in Galilee (although some may have been from other places).

But they also had differences.

Work. Fishermen, Tax collectors.

Politics: A Tax collector and a Zealot.

Education.

Class.

Diversity in the Church

Sounds like church to me.

Unity does not mean conformity.

In fact it means learning to get along with others who are unlike us.

Unity in Christ means diversity.

We are together not because we are like each other.

Not even that we begin liking each other.

We are together because of Christ.

Communion

You may not love each other but Jesus loves you.

This is why Jesus will later command his disciples: Love one another.

And this is why we share communion together.

If there is someone you are unwilling to get along with,

please do not take this communion.