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St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Effingham, Illinois
1 July 2007

The Thirteenth Sunday of the Year (C)

The cost of discipleship is high and requires that everything - even family and home - take second place to Jesus Christ. Nothing can come before following Jesus Christ in a life of fidelity. "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

Friday Holy Mother Church celebrated the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul and in each of their lives we see their radical faithfulness. Toward the end of Peter's life we are told that he was walking along the Appian Way leaving the city of Rome as persecution broke out. As he ran from Persecution Peter saw Jesus walking toward Rome. Surprised, Peter asked Jesus, "Domine, quo vadis?" "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "Eo Romam iterum crucifi." "I am going to Rome to be crucified anew." At that very moment Peter knew that he was placing his own desires above the will of the Lord, that he had looked back after setting his hand to the plow. Shaken, Peter returned to Rome where he was crucified upside down in Nero's circus, very near the present Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome today.