

AN OPEN INVITATION

Jesus invited those who asked Him, "Where do you stay?" to come and see. This was an open invitation. He did not give an address or say over there. Instead, He invited them to join Him. He makes the same invitation to us. We are invited to come and see. Like those in the Gospel, some stay a short while, others stay for a lifetime. Many in the time of Jesus listened for a while and went back to their way of life. Others were changed forever. Jesus is not a destination. Jesus is a relationship that brings us to a union with God. This relationship reveals possibility and potential to those who believe. These are amazing times and this Savior longs for us to come and see.

When I was discerning about entering the seminary, I told my parents late in the game. I did not want to be judged and I also did not want to feel trapped in a vocation if it really wasn't what God was calling me to do. As I was packing, my mom came up to my room to talk. She said, "The door is always open to you, no questions will ever be asked." It was a relief. I was in college when I really took seriously what God had been nagging me about in my high school years. Until that time I ran from it, I pushed it away, I denied it. But when I finally accepted the invitation to come and see, what I saw and felt was amazing. What I experienced offered me the confidence to follow the Holy Spirit. It has never been an easy journey, yet my relationship with the Lord Jesus, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and a love of all that the heavenly Father has created gave me a foundation to face the suffering and sacrifices of the life of a priest. Total trust is what is expected and tested. Sacramental grace changes the lives of everyone who allow it to happen. My life is still open to that invitation to come and see. My life is still a journey to find an even deeper relationship with the One who walked the face of the earth and died for my sins.

An invitation from Jesus does not just happen once. It happens every day. It is my prayer that we will always long to see everything He longs for us to see and to follow in every direction He longs for us to follow.

As the journey continues, may it find us in prayer for one another.



Father John Ouper