READINGS: Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18/ Ephesians 5:21-32 / John 6:60-69
**Theme:**  **Are We on the Lord’s Side?**
21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

As the Israelites were almost close to the Promised Land and Moses was almost at the end of his life, he asked them to make a choice between the Lord God and the idols of the other nations. Those who chose God would receive life and other blessings, whereas those who chose other gods would experience calamities including death (Deuteronomy chapters 28-30, esp. 30:15-20). Similarly, the successor of Moses, Joshua, who eventually led the Israelites to the Promised Land, placed options before them: they were to choose between God and other gods (Joshua 21:1-2, 15-18). In a similar fashion, Jesus Christ asked the Twelve Apostles to make a choice between himself and the crowd of thousands who were deserting him: “Do you also wish to go?” (John 6:67).

Beloved, it might be very easy for one to opt for the Lord if the choice is between the Lord and an idol. However, today the evil one takes on various deceptive forms; and so unless we allow the Spirit of God to lead us to discern, we may mistake the evil one for the Lord. In the above Gospel reading, for instance, it was the majority of thousands of people who deserted the Lord, whereas the minority of Twelve Apostles chose to stay with the Lord. In our present democratic dispensation, one could easily be led astray to think that the majority is right. But this was not the case in the Gospel story.

The evil one, who cunningly led Adam and Eve astray, sometimes cleverly uses the democratic principle that the majority carries the day to lead societies to make choices that are against the will and Word of God. For instance, whereas the design of God is that marriage is between a man and a woman (*cf*. second reading), in some societies today the evil one has cunningly influenced the will of the majority to re-define marriage to include same-sexes. Again, though God, the Author of life, commands that no human person has power to take the life of his fellow human being (*cf*. Deuteronomy 5:17), abortion and euthanasia have been legalized in some countries.

A paradox: in some of these countries where same-sex marriages, abortion and euthanasia have been legalized, Christians are in the majority! How did they vote? Are they raising a loud voice in unison against these laws? Are Christians in those countries timid or have they been blinded by the cunning of the evil one? Christians in these countries should arise and use the same democratic instruments to turn the tables in favour of the will of God!

Beloved, let us not be like the multitudes whom the Lord fed and who nonetheless deserted him. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit to give us the gift of discernment to always know the will of the Lord and the gift of fortitude to empower us to always choose that which is in accordance with the same Divine will. Amen!