



Following Jesus

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We follow all sorts of people and organizations on social media. Friends. Celebrities. A favorite author, athlete, charity, or business. At times, we may think before following: do we want the additional postings or emails? Typically, following a business or celebrity does not require much of a commitment. We may or may not read every post that comes through on our feed. We might respond, or we may not. Even when we do, our response is often as simple as hitting the “like” button.

Following Jesus is a very different sort of thing. To follow Jesus means to enter into a relationship with him and to exercise good stewardship over that relationship. When Jesus asks us to follow him, we know that doing so is to have an impact in our lives. As with any friendship, if our relationship with Jesus is to grow, we will have to spend time with and pay attention to him. At first, this might mean taking a few moments at the beginning or end of each day for prayer.

We may be more attentive during Mass; we may pause in the midst of our day’s activities to notice the beauty of creation, the blessing of family and friends, the gift of kindness and patience shared among co-workers. The best of friends also influence each other, for the better. Growing in relationship with Jesus will change us, leading us to think of others as well as ourselves, often putting the needs of others first. We learn to be mindful of those who need to know God’s love through our actions, serving them, sharing forgiveness, mercy, compassion, and faith.

Following Jesus is the work of a lifetime. At every step forward, one is challenged to go further in accepting and loving God’s will. Being a disciple is not just something else to do, alongside many other things suitable for Christians; it is a total way of life and requires continuing conversion (Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response, p. 15).

How will you follow Jesus now and into the future? How will you learn from and invite him to have an impact in your life? How will your stewardship of this relationship impact the way you live?