

Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year C - 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

A resource for personal, family and community prayer.



“Do not be afraid; from now on it is people you will catch.”

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

You are invited to read the Gospel passage attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.

¹Jesus was standing one day by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the word of God, ²when he caught sight of two boats close to the bank. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats- it was Simon's - and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

⁴When he had finished speaking he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch,” ⁵“Master,” Simon replied “we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets.” ⁶And when they had done this they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, ⁷so they signalled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them; when they came, they filled the two boats to sinking point. ⁸When Simon Peter saw this he fell at the knees of Jesus saying, “Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man.”

⁹For he and all his companions were complete-

ly overcome by the catch they had made; ¹⁰so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. But Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on it is people you will catch.” ¹¹Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him.

Background to Gospel passage

Where does it happen? By the Lake of Gennesaret, also known as the Sea of Galilee or Tiberius.

When does it happen? Jesus, the itinerant preacher, has been proclaiming the Gospel in synagogues throughout Galilee and Judaea and is now back in Capernaum.

Who is there? Simon Peter the fisherman and his working companions, including James and John, sons of Zebedee.

What happens? To their surprise and against their better instincts as men of the sea, Jesus invites Simon Peter and his companions to trust in him and put out their nets again into deeper water. Although disappointed and frustrated at having worked the whole night long and caught nothing, they do as Jesus asks and are overwhelmed by the catch. Simon Peter is

deeply humbled by this profound experience of God's generous love. Regardless of his shortcomings and failings, Jesus invites Simon Peter and his companions to come and work

with him in drawing people together into the safety net of God's love. Leaving everything, they set out together on this new adventure.

Suggested Guidelines to help you recognise this passage in your life experience.

“Put out into the deep water and pay out your nets for a catch”

Remember the times when you were called to let go of what was comfortable and familiar and to enter into “deeper waters”: -perhaps it was to be reconciled with someone, to become more involved in the service of your local church or community, to go back to school, to join a twelve step programme or do a marriage encounter weekend or a life in the spirit seminar.

“Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man.”

Remember the times, like St Peter, when you put up objections to this new challenge with

“what if..., I tried this before and it didn't work...”etc. Trusting in God, you did it anyway and it bore fruit in abundance.

“so they signalled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them”

Remember the times when you were faced with great challenges and called upon the willing support and help of others.

“The crowd were pressing round them”

Have you had the experience of being at a special liturgical event - a mass, a prayer gathering, a pilgrimage to a holy shrine - an experience of life-giving grace and challenge?

What does this gospel remind me of? *Where was it? When was it? Who was there? What happened?*

Now I can see that God's loving presence and action was in that life experience.

Prayer Response - you are invited to respond in prayer in your own words.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for the times when I have experienced this gospel in my life...

Heavenly Father, I am sorry for the times I have fallen short of living this gospel...

Heavenly Father, please help me to live this gospel...



You are invited to deepen this prayer experience by resting your heart silently in God's presence and love. The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage may help you on this journey to stillness and silence.

An Invitation to Reflect

What new insight has the Gospel opened my eyes to see?

Action

This week I will try to live the Gospel by...

Thought for the week

If we settle for life as it is, we will never know all that life could be.

Rest in this truth, hold it in prayer and trust that it will bear fruit in your life.

Children



Jesus called Simon and his friends to follow Him and become 'fishers of people,' sharing God's love with others. This reminds us that when we follow Jesus we can help bring others closer to Him.

Can you think of a 'Jesus person'- a parent, grandparent or teacher- who has helped you become closer to God?

Draw or write about this 'Jesus person' and how they helped you become closer with God.



Father, I thank you for the gift of this story which has taught me to recognise the importance of sharing the message of Your Son with others.

Action: this week I will try to show love by...

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