

Homily: Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

Date: 21 September 2025

Preacher: Father John Holoduek, OCA

...They forsook all and followed Him.

We are getting introduced to the Jesus in the Gospel of St. Luke. We learn from the Infancy Narratives; we have a genealogy revealed...quite different from that of St. Matthew's Revision. We are introduced to St. John the Baptist; Jesus goes into the Desert. Jesus is rejected by the Synagogue Officials and Congregants at Nazareth.

We know that the Jesus adopts Capernaum as His Hometown. And, He began an active and popular Healing and Preaching Ministry. By the time of this Gospel Passage, People wanted to hear Jesus' Preaching, and, if So Blessed, they would be also might witness some Healing Event...maybe even that the Healing or Miracle could be for their own benefit.

Jesus must have observed Peter and Andrew, James and John...and their Crews earlier at their labors. He took advantage of the work of the day, so He used the Fishing Boats as a platform for His Preaching. Peter's and Zebedee's Crews must have been familiar with Jesus' Ministries, so they were quick to allow Him to use their Boats. Peter was also quick to be obedient to put out into the deep and lower his nets again. ***Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.*** (Luke 5:4b) Peter knew his trade; he worked that night and the area of the Lake for it would be a time most advantageous for a catch. What would a Carpenter know about Merchant Fishing? But, Peter already knew that God was working with Jesus!

The abundance of the catch taught Peter some other lessons: he realized that this **Miracle of Abundance** was greater than what the Sea of Galilee could have yielded at any time for a single catch; Peter also realized that this Miracle demonstrated that he witnessed was greater than *God Working With A Single Man.*

Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! (Luke 5:8) Peter confessed Jesus as Lord, and Peter confessed himself as a sinful man. Two Powerful Acts, which had an effect on the his body, soul, and spirit.

Jesus then takes that moment to call Andrew, Peter, James, and John as Disciples! ***“Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.” So, when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.*** (Luke 5:10-11)

Their Lives had been changed!

This is what we need in our relationship with Christ! We need this exchange! What we thought was So Important is exchanged with what is Truly Important! Sometimes, this happens in a Romantic Relationship. Most times this occurs with a Religious Vocational Relationship!

The lasting result of Peter’s obedience is that we learn about the Kingdom of God. The Lord teaches us that the fish symbolizes people, and the catch symbolizes the call to eternal life. The Lord tells Peter that from that moment on, he would be fishing the souls of people into the Kingdom of God. It points to the work of the Church to bring the Gospel to people of all tongues and nations, a great multitude who will enter the Kingdom. As boats filled with fish, the Church has been and will continue to be filled with the people of God. The Lord brings His people from across the world and throughout the ages to follow Him.

Saint Ambrose of Milan says, ***What is so deep, as the knowledge of the Son of God! But what are the nets of the Apostles which are ordered to be let down, but the interweaving of words which . . . bring up those that are tossing about in the waves from the depths below to the regions above.***

Peter feels unworthy to be in the Lord’s presence when this miracle occurs. A heart that God has touched is a heart that recognizes its own failures and trusts entirely in the love and grace of God. Jesus shows him and the three other disciples that everyone is special and that they can become fishermen of souls if they follow Him. They, too, can help save people.

Everyone who believes in Christ is called to be His disciple, and work on spreading the Gospel, which means the **Good News**. This is the work of the Church, which is the work of every member of Christ's Body, that is, us. God is love, and He wants everyone to be saved. He gives us daily opportunities to repent, follow Him and seek salvation.

Peter, James, John, and Andrew are astonished when they see this Miracle, so they leave everything and follow Jesus. Similarly, the Lord calls us to leave all earthly things behind, that is, to shift our hearts from worldly things to Him, and make Him our priority. He calls us to follow Him with hope in our hearts, going on the path of love and salvation.

Our Challenge: *Jesus Says To Peter, James, John, and Andrew Not To Fear. He Tells Us The Same.* We spend much time and energy on the things of this life as we seek to provide for our loved ones and ourselves. We apply our talents, training, experience, and hope as we work for good things. There is nothing wrong with this, and in fact, this is a virtue. However, we are called to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things we strive for will be added to us.

If we become Doers of God's Word, and if we trust Him enough to obey Him, even when we do not entirely understand the circumstances, we know that He is with us. We know He gives us the abundant grace we need and desire, for He loves us. Following Him without reservation is both the prerequisite and the result of having our nets full so that we, too, may inherit eternal life.

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