



# WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C

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*Do not be afraid.*

*From now on you will be catching men. Luke 5:11*

Luke's description of the call of the first disciples is unique in several respects. Only Luke recounts the miraculous catch of fish at the calling of the first apostles, although John recounts a similar episode, but after the resurrection (see *John 21:1–14*.) This miracle evokes in Simon Peter the same reaction that God's appearance evoked in Isaiah in today's first reading. Once he becomes aware of the presence of the Lord, he is overwhelmed with a sense of his unworthiness. In fact, there is repentance and a movement toward humility. You could say this was the Lord's plan, to show Peter a path to metanoia and a deepening awareness of the divinity of Jesus, leading to the Lord calling Simon to follow him.

Luke generally paints a very positive picture of Simon Peter throughout the gospel and Acts. Although James and John are also part of this episode, the focus is clearly on Simon. It is his boat Jesus uses to teach, he is the one whom Jesus tells to put out the nets, he is the one who falls in adoration before Jesus, and he is the one whom Jesus says will become a fisher of people. The other disciples are included, but they are in the background.

Another characteristically Lucan note comes at the end, as the evangelist notes that the disciples "*left everything*" and followed Jesus. Luke's gospel is the gospel of complete renunciation, expressing the completeness of the commitment needed to follow Jesus. Like Isaiah in the first reading, the disciples here are eager to do the will of God and follow Jesus unreservedly.

This passage is a familiar one, so as you reflect on it, look to renew your heart with the passion that Peter felt. Reflect on the amazement of the disciples at the miraculous catch of fish. How would you have reacted as you consider Peter's response? Listen with the ear of your heart the words Jesus spoke to Peter, and feel the urge to embrace the call to be fishers of people.

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**A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke.**

While Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret,  
and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God,  
he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake;  
the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.  
Jesus got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon,  
and asked him to put out a little way from the shore.

Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.  
When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon,  
*"Put out into the deep water  
and let down your nets for a catch."*

Simon answered,  
*"Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing.  
Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets."*

When they had done this,  
they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break.  
So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them.  
And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink.  
But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying,  
*"Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!"*

For Simon Peter and all who were with him were amazed  
at the catch of fish that they had taken;  
and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee,  
who were partners with Simon.

Then Jesus said to Simon,  
*"Do not be afraid;  
from now on you will be catching men."*

When they had brought their boats to shore,  
they left everything and followed Jesus.

**The Gospel of the Lord**