

SCC REFLECTION: 4th Sunday Year C. Lk. Fr Donal McIlraith



Text: Luke 5:1-11

Duc in altum (Latin) "Put out into the deep"

- [1] While the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennes'aret.
- [2] And he saw two boats by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.
- [3] Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat.
- [4] And when he had ceased speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."
- [5] And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets."
- [6] And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking,
- [7] they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.
- [8] But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."
- [9] For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken;
- [10] and so also were James and John, sons of Zeb'edee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men."
- [11] And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

Reflection.

1. Mark just tells us that Jesus called Simon, Andrew, James and John and they followed him (Mk 1:18-20). Luke discovered, it seems, that there was a fish miracle involved. The occupation of these four was netting fish. Jesus netted them by using fish! The scene opens by the lake. Washing their nets mean they were fishing all night. In the first three verses Jesus kerekere's Simon's boat in order to preach the word to the people. Sitting down is the sign of teacher. Jesus is presented here as a teacher of the word, but we will shortly see he is more. Now we see Jesus preaching from the barque of Peter, something he has continued to do for 2000 years.
2. Simon fishes these waters every night and knows them well. The fish are just not running now. Jesus' command shakes him. After all Jesus is a *kai colo*, from the mountains. "Go to the deep and let down your nets." It won't do any good," Peter objects, "but" – I suppose because he had heard Jesus preach the word – "at your word I will let down the nets." Jesus has taken charge of the boat and the fishing. We too are the boat and must not be cowardly but let Jesus guide us with our fishing
3. Then comes the miracle that netted Simon and his companions. It is a wonderful scene, greedy fishermen not willing to lose a sardine, but the boats will sink if they take in any more fish. They are dumbfounded and full of wonder.
4. Then comes the spiritual miracle, the transformation of Simon Peter (Note how Luke includes his new name, Peter, here). Peter wakes up to what is really happening and calls Jesus, "Lord." Like the prophets of old, Isaiah in Isa 6 or Jeremiah in Jer 1, the holiness of Jesus makes Peter aware of his sinfulness. "Depart from me," he begs.
5. They left everything. But perfection comes in following Jesus. They are now his disciples, but they will continue to be fisherfolk." Do not be afraid," Jesus consoles them, "henceforth you will catch people alive." I say "catch alive" because Luke used an unusual Greek word here that means to catch alive. This is still the task of the church, bringing people to Jesus.

Next Week. Lk 6:17.20-26

[17] And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases.

...

[20] And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

[21] "Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. "Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh.

[22]"Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of man!

[23] Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

[24] But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.

[25] "Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger. "Woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

[26] "Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.