

Today we hear about God's Call

- Isaiah hears God while praying in the Temple
- Peter drops everything and follows Jesus after seeing the catch of fish

Have you ever wondered if God is calling you?

How would He do it? What would happen?

I think God works more in the day-to-day stuff than speaking like He did to Isaiah.

For example:

"Coincidences" in life that sometimes set the whole direction of your life

- How our parents met
- How we met our spouses
 - My father worked for Sears
 - I grew up in Fitchburg, Pittsfield, Brockton, and Lowell
 - In Lowell I met some friends that invited me on a retreat (coincidence?)
- I met my wife at Umass
 - She could have gone to other schools
 - I didn't have to be in Amherst that weekend (coincidence?)
- I've heard story after story about how God-created coincidences have changed peoples lives – BUT – THERE IS A PATTERN Isaiah, Peter, even Paul

1. Start from unworthiness
2. Experience the grace or forgiveness of God
3. Commission
4. Respond

Start from unworthiness – we all know our sin, and feel inadequate

But is that true – or a lie to keep us down?

We are children of God, We are Beloved

We come from Victory – So what does God do –

The grace of God – the forgiveness of God – For Is. - an Angel with a burning coal

For Pete - Word from Jesus – WE HAVE FORGIVENESS

That's the Good News

Commission – While he's kneeling in the bottom of the boat "I'll make you fisher of men

While kneeling in the Temple Isaiah hears "Who will I send"

Respond – "Send Me" – what a change from "I'm a man with unclean lips"

Each of us is loved by God. We all know others ALSO loved by God.

Whether at school, at home, or at work – we have the same call of Isaiah and Peter.

We CAN talk to others about our faith

In the gospel passage we hear today, we find Jesus continuing to gather his disciples. Climbing into Simon's boat moored at the Lake of Gennesaret, Jesus addressed the shoreline crowds before him. Then, as a sign of his divine authority, Jesus insists that Simon and his crew once again put out into deeper water and lower their nets for a catch. Insisting that the attempt will be futile because they've been unsuccessful all through the night, Simon acquiesced to Jesus and once again lowered the nets. And, of course, the result is that so many fish filled the nets that they were in danger of tearing apart. Once the catch was safely onboard, Simon expressed both fear and awe at this man who had caused the miraculous catch. Jesus calmed him with the assurance, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." (Luke 5:10)

Yes, Simon and his boat mates were to become fishers of people; that is, they had been commissioned to populate the church with new members through the message of Jesus they were to disseminate. First, though, these fishers of people had themselves to be caught. Before they could be fishers, they were fish. And I'm guessing it's a terrifying experience for a free-swimming fish to be netted and hauled aboard a craft. Worse than terrifying that they must then undergo death in order to become sustenance for others. Yet, it's what Jesus is calling every Christian to be: a netted fish willing to die to self in order to secure a deeper experience of life. And more than that, we "caught fish" are to actively ensnare others in the net of faith.

DIALOGUE – what happens to fish? Die – feed others – et al