

## Proper 1

*Sunday between 4 and 10 February inclusive, if earlier than the Second Sunday before Lent* • Fourth Week in Ordinary Time

### Principal Service readings

Isaiah 6.1-8 [9-13]	Isaiah sees the glory of the Lord
Psalms 138	Thanksgiving for God's faithfulness
1 Corinthians 15.1-11	Paul, the least of the apostles
Luke 5.1-11	The miraculous catch of fish, and the calling of the first disciples

### Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,  
speak to our hearts in the stillness,  
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,  
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;  
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

### Gospel Reading

#### *The first disciples are called*

<sup>1</sup> While Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, <sup>2</sup> he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> He 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. <sup>4</sup> When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' <sup>5</sup> Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' <sup>6</sup> When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. <sup>7</sup> So they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup> But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful

man!’<sup>9</sup> For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; <sup>10</sup> 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 people.’ <sup>11</sup> When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed Jesus.

Luke 5.1-11 NRSV<sup>1</sup>

## Comments and Questions

In the previous chapter Luke records the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry. In chapter five he is already calling his first disciples. Does he need disciples, or can he carry out his work on his own?

Luke gives the call of Simon Peter a special prominence. Could the size of the catch of fish be indicative of the scale of Peter’s mission work?

Luke doesn’t tell us whether Simon Peter was grudging or glad to take his boat out again, but he voices an initial objection to fishing again before obeying Jesus (v.5).

After witnessing the manifestation of Jesus’ power in the huge catch of fish, Peter is awe-struck and becomes aware of his own sinfulness. Why do you think this is? What is your response to the glory and holiness of God?

Jesus does not tell Simon Peter off, but rather encourages him, presenting him with the idea of his future mission in terms he readily understands (‘fisher of people’).

Many people had been following Jesus, eager to see miracles or to be healed, which is why Jesus got into Simon Peter’s boat in the first place. But Peter and the others will be more than just followers, they respond immediately to the challenge to follow Jesus by leaving everything (v.11). The first disciples came to be called ‘apostles’, the word ‘apostle’ means ‘sent out’.

Do you see the ‘recklessness’ of the first disciples as an exciting adventure, or as a worrying risk?

What are we prepared to leave to follow Jesus? is there anything holding us back, or that we are holding on to?

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<sup>1</sup> *New Revised Standard Version Bible* is copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

What specific thing might you do in the coming week which is responding to the call to discipleship?

### **Quotations**

**1**

And I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!'

Isaiah 6.5 NRSV

**2**

If we were willing to learn the meaning of real discipleship and actually to become disciples, the Church in the West would be transformed, and the resultant impact on society would be staggering.

David C. K. Watson, 1933–1984

**3**

There are two words used a great deal by Jesus in the Gospels. One is 'Come', and the other is 'Go'. It 's no use coming unless you go, and its no use going unless you come.

anonymous

**4**

To love God is to will what he wills.

Charles de Foucauld, 1858–1916

### **Related topics**

*For further study:*

Discipleship; conversion; evangelization; calling ; vocation; ministry

### **Closing Prayer**

Most holy God,  
the earth is filled with your glory,  
and in your presence angels stand in awe.

Enlarge our vision,  
that we may recognize your power at work in your Son

and join the apostles and prophets  
as heralds of your saving word.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

Collect for the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Opening Prayers : Scripture-related Collects for Years A, B and C, from The Sacramentary /*  
International Commission on English in the Liturgy. – Norwich : Canterbury Press, 1999. –  
(The ICEL Collects, 1997)

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