**FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEB. 8-9, 2025**

Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time

**Gospel Reading**

Lk 5: 1-11

While the crowd was pressing in on Jesus and listening to the

word of God, he was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret.

He saw two boats there alongside the lake; the fishermen had

disembarked and were washing their nets.

Getting into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, he

asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. Then he

sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into

deep water and lower your nets for a catch.”

Simon said in reply, “Master, we have worked hard all night and

have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets.”

When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish

and their nets were tearing.

They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come to help

them. They came and filled both boats so that they were in

danger of sinking.

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and

said, “Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.”

For astonishment at the catch of fish they had made seized him

and all those with him,

and likewise James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were

partners of Simon. Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from

now on you will be catching men.”

When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything

and followed him.

**Intercession**

May we, through prayerful support of the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, seek to bring Christ’s bounty to those in need.

**Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

Trusting God can be difficult. We *say* we trust that God will provide, has a plan for us, will heal us, loves us no matter what, etc. Still, surrendering to God’s will and trusting, as St. Francis de Sales reminds us, that he will “…either shield us from suffering or gives us strength to bear it” is easier said than done. Self-reliance, it seems, is more in our nature.

But look what happens when we trust in God’s ways. Like Simon Peter’s nets that are so full of fish they begin to tear, our life yields incredible fullness when we trust in God. Maybe this fullness doesn’t always take the form we want, but it is always what we need. Time and time again, we experience God’s boundless love, but fear causes us to revert to the habit of relying on our own efforts. We are afraid to give ourselves over to the Lord even though He repeatedly tells us to “be not afraid.”

Even in our own faltering, we can help others experience God’s grace – and experience it ourselves. By supporting our Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, we can bring this feeling of plenty to those who need to know God’s love for themselves.

**Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

Jesus was the son of a carpenter. He selected Simon Peter, a self-professed “sinful man” and humble fisherman, as his disciple. James and John, fishermen as well, were also among Christ’s first disciples, as was Matthew, a tax collector and thus viewed with suspicion. Jesus didn’t fill his ranks with the mighty and the revered. He called the common and the flawed to follow him. He still does today. He entrusts his ministry to imperfect and ordinary people like us.

How do we live out Jesus’ invitation to “come after me, and I will make you fishers of men?” (Matthew 4:19). We must be willing to share Jesus’ message with those around us. We must demonstrate Christ’s love through service. And, if possible, we must support ministries and programs that make tangible the Good News Jesus proclaimed. When we contribute to the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, we are saying “yes” to Jesus’ call to cast our nets into the water “to be catchers of men” in His name.

**Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Fishing boat on water reflecting light

Header: “Do not be afraid” – Luke 5:10

Copy: Jesus will always provide what we need; we just need to trust him! Through the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, we can share our good fortune with others.