



Today's Gospel describes the beginning of Jesus' preaching and healing ministry and the call of his Apostles who were to continue that ministry. Jesus started his public ministry immediately after John the Baptist was arrested. Following John's pattern, Jesus, too, invited his hearers to repent as preparation for believing in the Gospel, or the Good News, of the Kingdom of God. **Repentance** means an about-face turn to God resulting in a change of mind, heart, behavior, and life. It also means sorrow for having refused God's love and a resolution to make amends. **Believing** in the Gospel demands from the hearers a resolution to take Jesus' words seriously, to translate them into action and to put trust in Jesus' authority. Jesus preached the **Gospel**, or Good News, that God is a loving, forgiving, caring and merciful Father Who wants to liberate us and save us from our sins through His son Jesus.

In today's gospel reading we find fishermen going about their daily work by the Sea of Galilee, casting their nets into the lake, mending their nets in their boats. They were doing what they did every day. It was in that very ordinary setting that they heard the call and the promise of Jesus, 'follow me and I will make you into fishers of people'. Having heard Jesus' call, they immediately responded to it. Their response meant leaving what they were used to and good at, fishing by the Sea of Galilee, and setting out on a very different road, sharing in Jesus' work of gathering not fish but people, not into physical nets but into the nets of God's loving reign. They completely depend on the Lord and have Him as "the Pride and Pearl" and "the Pillar and Foundation" of their life.

The Lord's call to follow him comes to us too in the course of our daily lives. It is when we are about our ordinary day to day activities that the Lord says to us, 'follow me'. We won't hear those words of Jesus in the way that those fishermen did. The Lord's call will be more subtle than that. It might take the form of a prompt to do something that we sense would bring some benefit to others. A thought might come into our head or a feeling might surface within

us that moves us in a direction that is life-giving for another. Most likely, it won't involve us leaving one whole way of life for another, as it did for some of Jesus' first followers, but it will always involve some letting go, some reaching out beyond ourselves. Whenever we go with the Lord's prompting, we discover that it is not only beneficial to others but, in some way, to ourselves as well. It is like dying of some kind that brings new life. As we go about the ordinary matters of the day, we can expect the Lord to call us, to prompt us, to inspire us. Hopefully, we will be as responsive to the Lord's call at the heart of our lives as those first disciples were in our gospel reading.

**Let us pray:**

Lord, I love You and thank You for the extraordinary life of grace You have called me to live. Help me to respond to Your invitation with the complete submission of my mind and will.

**Jesus, I trust in You.**