

2025 / 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

-Luke uses this fishing story to show how Jesus calls Peter.

-While focusing on Jesus calling Peter: A couple of points

-You don't casually enter a fishermen's boat / This is their life and livelihood / Yet Peter let's Jesus come aboard His boat.

-Jesus speaks directly to Peter / We see a relationship / Fr. Josemaria Escriva' noted: "Before becoming apostles they are fishermen / After becoming Apostles they are fishermen still / So what changed / There is a change inside the soul now that Jesus has come aboard" (Superabundant Grace).

-As events unfold we learn about "mission" (our's and the Church) / Working on their own, the disciples grow tired and see no results / But when they work in Christ's name and on His instructions / The fruit born is much greater compared to their efforts alone / Even in a messy world.

-Luke's Gospel tells us about the incredible catch of fish / Luke's fishing focuses on Jesus calling Peter / And Jesus says: "you will become fishers of men" / In John's Gospel the fishing story (ch.21) takes place after the Resurrection / Jesus takes Peter aside and tells Him to "feed my sheep" / This scene takes place after breakfast where a charcoal fire burns on the beach where they have been fishing / The menu includes (2 or so) of the 153 miraculous fish pulled out of the lake at the WORD OF CHRIST.

-This is on my heart to today:

-How often have we read an awesome Biblical story / But in the end, it's a nice story from a long time ago / After all: the world is so different today, and so are we.

-In the 1951 movie based on the 1896 book "Quo Vadis" / The Bible comes to life /Peter is in Rome / He is speaking strongly for Jesus and bringing people into the Church / Peter is an magnetic and imposing figure.

-What was AD50 Rome like when Peter came to preach (20 years after Jesus)?

-Rome was close to the height of its political, economic, and military might / A new world order of peace and prosperity / This Roman world brought forth by the efforts, labor, and sacrifice of soldiers and those on the frontier.

-Peter's audience are those who have only known a world of luxury, wealth, and material excess from the fruits and sacrifices of those who have come before them / They have running water, flushing toilets, billboards, traffic jams / In many ways they are like us today / And Like today after the spoils of success; they begin to experience crime, unemployment, slums, & divisions based on class and race.

-And religion in AD50 Rome: You had some who believed in a spiritual world outside themselves / But many become world weary sophisticated skeptics, who abandon religion altogether, except the obligatory incense offered once a year.

-Peter brings the message of Jesus into this Roman world (20 years after the Crucifixion and Resurrection) / His message so powerful that after his death (by crucifixion) in AD64-67 / Constantine, In AD350, declares Christianity acceptable to practice in Rome / He becomes Catholic through the witness of his mother and a dream.

-But like Roman times and today we know the story / Sometimes empires and individuals begin to focus on the world to the point of missing that Jesus is in the boat to guide us.

-The world of the early church is not some faraway place un-relatable to us / No, we are living the same story / Yet, Christ is with us in the Sacraments and through the Holy Spirit / We can live our lives in fear and be timid / Or through the Sacraments, and vibrant Parishes become fishers of men / Let us Experience Jesus in the Mass / and be strengthened by spending time with Jesus in our Adoration Chapel.

-May we let Jesus board our boat and become fishers of men / Bringing beauty, truth, and joy into a world searching, and seeking answers / Why we are here, and what is the purpose life?

An interesting story:

-Chase Hilgenbrinck story while in Chile / Jesus leads him from Major League Soccer to the priesthood / "He Became a fisher of men / He is currently the Vocation Director of the Diocese of Peoria in Illinois.

What will be your story?

-Last words:

If you sometimes feel unworthy, or life has you down for the count / Say to the Lord: Please let me remember to invite you to come aboard / Help me in my weakness / And please let me always remember when I do things and see the world through the eyes of Faith / At my lowest moment you will say to me / Do not be afraid / Rise up and walk with Confidence / Because your life and work will be fruitful in my Holy Name.

-To become "Holy" is when we know we are unworthy by own merits / But when we set out into the deep in the Name of Christ, that is the moment we are open to Grace leading to fruitful life.

**Vivat Jesus,
Fr. Vic Gournas**