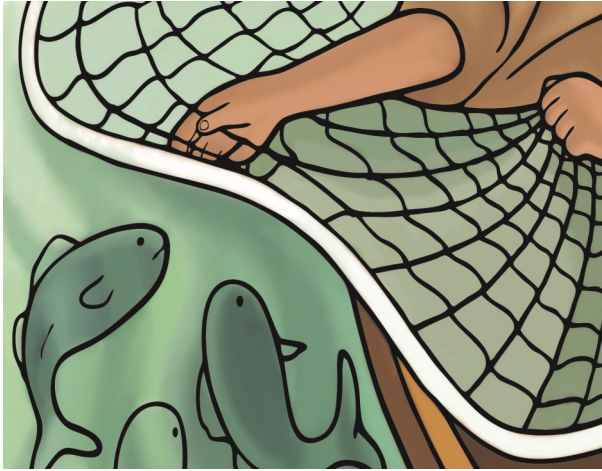


FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We will hear in this Sunday's Gospel that Jesus calls fishermen to be His Apostles. I never gave it much thought before, but as I read this Gospel to prepare for the weekend, I began to ask myself what could have been the reason Jesus had for choosing fishermen to be His Apostles? Fishermen, for such an important prophetic mission? No doubt Jesus could have found more polished, more devoted, more qualified individuals to be the prophets of the New Exodus that He was ushering in. Why would He go up to Galilee and get fishermen to do it?

The reasons are fantastic news for you and for me. I would propose that one of the reasons God chooses, dare I say, lowly, fishermen to bring the message of the Gospel was precisely to show us that the work of evangelization is divine and not human. I remember one of my philosophy professors in the seminary expounding on this point. He said to the class on multiple occasions, "Do you think you are going to evangelize? Do you think that you are going to convert someone?" Then he would laugh and laugh. He was not being insulting or trying to insinuate that we were not capable of spreading the Good News of the Gospel, even though we weren't. He was simply trying to make his point which was, "God is the One who evangelizes," as he would say very seriously. "He has already prepared the person whom He is going to send you to and given them the grace to accept the announcement of the Good News you are bringing."

That is also why Jesus only selected twelve Apostles. Did you ever consider how low of a number that was for a worldwide mission? By having such a low number, it shows that the spread of Christianity was not something that was brought about by clever human tactics. It was brought about by the Holy Spirit of God. It was brought about by the inspiration of God. It was brought about by the fulfillment of prophecy. Recall the scripture passage that speaks about how a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough.

Another reason, that strikes at a natural level, is that fishermen, professional fishermen like Peter, James, John, and Andrew would have certain natural qualities that would be advantageous to proclaiming the Gospel. What would those natural qualities look like? Well, think about the fact that to be a fisherman you must have patience. I have not done a lot of fishing, but I know that you do not just catch something if you are rushing. You must wait, you must learn to wait. I would also say a fisherman has to rely on God. There is nothing one can do to make the fish bite. The weather conditions must be right; the natural conditions must be right. These things are not always in our hands, but they are in God's hands. A fisherman is particularly inclined to learn how to be patient, and wait, and rely on God. That is really going to be the gift that Peter, Andrew, James, and John will utilize as they begin to spread the Gospel.

The Apostles are going to realize it is not going to be because of them, or their gifts, or their skills that the Gospel spreads throughout the world. It is going to be because of the grace of God, and He is only calling them to answer the vocation, answer the call, embark on the mission, and then persevere, be patient. God will make sure that the catch is a good one. Fantastic news. It is the same for you and me. What are we waiting for?

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Jason". The signature is stylized and cursive.