

## V TRINITY 2017

### SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH

#### FATHER CRAIG LOONEY

##### SAINT LUKE 5.1



*"Jesus said...go fishing! He said nothing about fixing the sink, mowing the lawn, walking the dog, painting the trim, washing the car, cleaning the garage, or weeding the garden."*

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This respectful yet hilarious saying is from the "Jesus Said" tee shirt line that first appeared in the 1990s and are still popular today. My Jewish brother-in-law gave me one for Christmas several years ago...we both laughed for hours! Today's Gospel is all about going fishing...for people!

Fishing takes a lot of patience. When I was a little boy, my dad would take me fishing to Lake Cachuma in the Santa Ynez Valley north of Santa Barbara. He had an infinite amount of patience...happy to just sit there even if he caught no fish. On the other hand, I wanted to catch all the fish in the lake. It took a number of years and more fishing trips for me to appreciate the peace and calm one could experience just sitting by the lake...big catch...little catch...or no catch.

This morning's Gospel is Saint Luke's account of Jesus calling his first disciples. Peter figures prominently in the story. He and his brother Andrew were partners with another set of brothers...James and John Zebedee...we know them well by the nickname Jesus gave them..."The Thunder Boys"...perhaps they were loud and impulsive fishermen who let off steam at the Bethsaida Bar and Grill after a hard day's work.

For Peter, Andrew and the Zebedee Brothers fishing wasn't a recreational activity...it was a necessity...a way of life...if they were to eat and support their families. The success of Zebedee and Sons Fish Company depended on how many fish they were able to catch.

Jesus attracted a large crowd wherever he went. The crowd in the Gospel is pushing Jesus closer to the water...Jesus asks Peter to push his boat out a ways so he could sit down and teach the people...so they could see and hear him better. Afterward he tells Peter to set sail for deeper water and go fishing.

Peter and his friends had already spent the day fishing and caught nothing, He is doubtful this latest fishing trip will net any results...but he does as Jesus asks. The amount of fish they catch is too much for Peter's boat...he calls his friends to come and help and both boats are filled with so many fish they start to sink.

Jesus has just demonstrated his power over nature...something only God can do...and this causes Peter to fall down at Jesus' feet and ask him to leave because he doubted him. "No worries", says Jesus, "Let's go catch some people."

The calling of the first disciples is the genesis of the Church...and Jesus is laying the groundwork for the ordained ministry...the Disciples would go on to become *Apostles...the sent out ones...*and the Gospel would get spread throughout the world.

Let's suppose Saint Joseph Parish is a large fish tank. The World...or at least our corner of it...is an ocean full of fish. We're both the fish who got caught up in the Church and we're those who are supposed to be out fishing. Where there are two fish...you get more fish...and that's how the Church and Saint Joseph Parish will grow.

Unlike the net that caught the fish in the Gospel...those fish were likely destined for the Friday Fish Fry...the Church is a safety net leading people to Jesus and Salvation. It can be a rough sea for all those fish trying to make sense out of an often turbulent and confusing world...God's peace is not the world's peace...it's a better peace!

The little boy sitting with his dad by Lake Cachuma so long ago wanted to catch every fish in the lake and not wait...right now was not soon enough! It doesn't work that way. Fishing does indeed take patience...and perseverance...and a great deal of prayer.

We want to see the Anglican Catholic Church and Saint Joseph Parish grow and prosper. Jesus gives us the tools to do our work...we should use them. Jesus said, "Go fishing!"

So, let's go catch some people!

