

Readings Acts 14: 21-27; Apocalypse 21: 1-5; John 13: 31-35



Fr Michael says:

The call of the first Disciples

The calling by name has great meaning in the Hebrew culture, the name is an indication of the person and who he or she is and is called to fulfil this calling – our name is the most personal gift we have after life itself, it defines us and enables us to develop and respond to the call we have received. At the same time the one calling reveals himself to us: the All-holy One for Isaiah; the role of Peter in his links with Jesus. The miraculous catch shows him, Jesus' holiness and his own unworthiness. He has yet to understand the wonderful calling by Jesus to all sinners, but opens himself up to Jesus' call.

Peter has been fishing all night and got nowhere! He is fed up as he tidies things away. Like us, he had tried his best to no effect. How often does this not happen to us in the course of our own lives, and we can still feel something of that anguish even yet! Jesus responds by encouragement and by making a suggestion – to launch into the deep (although the experience of the fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, was, that the early morning was not the time to do so! Jesus is aware that the last thing a person wants who has not succeeded in something is to have his face rubbed in his failure! Rare is the person who can draw hope from such a situation. Most of us need encouragement, belief in us and a gentle challenge – failure needs to be seen only in the fact of us not getting up from it to carry on!

Success is not everything, by winning an argument we might alienate a friend; by competition and promotion we may move forward in our career, but often at the expense of our relationships with others. Jesus is not blaming Peter, but wants him to move on to new things: hence the invitation: "launch out"! Each of us has an area within ourselves, which has never been opened, to discover it we need challenges to go beyond ourselves. Jesus is aware of Peter's weaknesses, but that does not stop him from realising he has the potential for greatness. We all need someone who accepts us for what we are, but who believes us capable of more and invites us to reach out for it. As a Jewish saying has it: "From success to failure is one step – from failure to success is a long road!"

Nelson Mandela borrowed these words from an anonymous source: "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate, but that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light – not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God – your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking, so that others won't feel insecure around us. We are born to make manifest the Glory of God that is within us...it's in everyone. As we let our light shine, we unconsciously allow others to do the same, as we are freed from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others."