

Homily 12th Sunday Year B 2021

A businessman, visiting a Brazilian village, saw a fisherman row to the shore having caught a quantity of fish. He asked the fisherman, *"How long did it take to catch so many fish?"* The fisherman replied, *"Oh, just a short while."* *"Then why don't you stay out longer and catch even more?"* asked the businessman. *"This is enough to feed my whole family,"* the fisherman said. The businessman then asked the fisherman what he did for the rest of the day. The fisherman replied, *"Well, I wake early, catch a few fish, then return and play with my children. In the afternoon, I take a nap with my wife. In the evening, I join my friends in the village for a drink — we play guitar, sing and dance throughout the night."*

The businessman told the fisherman that if he spent more time at sea, he would catch more fish. *"With more money you could buy a bigger boat and catch even more fish. Soon you could buy more boats, set up your own company with a production plant for canned food and a distribution network and become even richer."*

The fisherman asks, *"And after that?"* The businessman laughed, *"After that, you can live like a king in your own house, then go public and float your shares in the Stock Exchange, becoming even richer."* The fisherman asks, *"And after that?"* The businessman said, *"After that, you can finally retire, move to a house by the fishing village, wake up early, catch a few fish, then return home to play with the children, have an afternoon nap with your wife, and in the evening, join your friends for a drink, play the guitar, sing and dance throughout the night!"* Puzzled, the fisherman replied, *"But I'm doing that already!"* (Classic Brazilian tale).

For the businessman, money is the priority. For the fisherman, family comes first.

Jesus continually shows us that, in the good and bad, the successes and failures of every day, we can learn something about God. In the face of Job's despair and the fear of drowning by the disciples, God is present with love and care. It is, however, a truth that only really become clear in extreme situations. God speaks to Job from the midst of the tempest. God comes to the aid of the disciples in the face of death by drowning. Currently, we face a growing climate emergency because money was far more important than people, than family. In the face of this threatened annihilation, God will speak to us and save us from self-destruction but only if we put family first, like the Brazilian fisherman!

- What did the shark say after eating a clownfish? That tasted rather funny!
- What did one fish say to the other? Keep your mouth shut and you won't get caught.
- Why do fish swim in schools? Because they can't walk.
- What's the fish that makes this sound "shhhhhhhhhhhhh"? Fried fish!