

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily  
Sunday, February 9, 2025  
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Cycle C

When God calls, it is often weird. Read about how God called young Isaiah to be His prophet. Then, in the Second Reading comes Saint Paul who, until the end of his life, wondered why Christ called him when he was a persecutor of the early Christians.

Finally, let me invite you to the shores of the Lake of Gennesaret. Simon Peter is tired and irritated. The whole night, he and his companions tried to catch fish- there was nothing. Peter wants to go home, have a good breakfast, and then sleep. Now comes this preacher from Nazareth who wants to use his boat as a pulpit. Not only that— the sermon is too long. Finally, He finishes, but instead of leaving the boat, He asks Peter with a sweet smile: “Put out into the deep water and lower your nets for a catch!” What does this craftsman from Nazareth know about fishing? Preach and leave the fishing to us seasoned fishermen, Peter must be thinking. At least these thoughts are written on his face. Jesus continues to look at him, smiling at the inner struggle Peter’s face reveals. That breaks him. OK, if you say so, I will lower the nets.” The rest of the Gospel passage then talks about the grand catch, about Peter’s surrender to Jesus and his leaving everything to follow Him.

God calls— He invites and doesn’t force anybody. Luckily, Isaiah, Paul, and Peter recognized the divine call and responded spontaneously. But being called by God does not mean that, from now on, life would be a stroll in the park. Being called by God for a special task means to take up the cross— but never alone, always with

Christ at our side, if we allow Him to help us carry our cross. This does not only refer to the vocation to priesthood or religious life. Married couples too, and everyone are call by God. Peter's answer should become ours: "If you say so, I will do it." This trust in His word prepares for the great miracle of success in the God-given task. And don't forget Jesus's command: "Put out into the deep!" That means don't remain in the shallow water. Go with Him into the deep. Trusting that he will always be with you to accomplish that journey.