

In today's gospel, Jesus calls two pairs of brothers, Andrew and Peter, James and John inviting them to become his disciples. The men respond immediately by leaving their nets, and their boats, and their father to follow Jesus. These fishermen immediately accept Jesus' invitation to "fish for people." Abandoning their nets was their way of leaving behind what they needed to become Jesus' disciple.

Jesus is still calling people to follow him today. He is calling you and me to follow him. Now it's up to us to decide to answer Him, and then to follow Him and make a difference for others. In today's readings, we learn that we should fully appreciate our call to be Christ's disciples, because every one of us is called by God. The mission of preaching, teaching and healing others that Jesus started back in Galilee is now a responsibility of each one of us. So our own unique vocation is the same as the entire Church. Be it as priest, deacon, married or single, we are all called. The call began with our baptism and the other sacraments of initiation. It becomes strengthened throughout the years with Eucharist and Reconciliation. So we need to be thankful to God for calling us to our mission in the Church, and then seek how to follow Him.

Can we be experiencing a similar call from God? Could we respond as those first disciples did? We all know that a vocation is a call from God. I know there are those of you young men who may be hearing God's call to serve Him as a priest or a brother, and some of you young women who may be experiencing similar thoughts about being a sister in a religious order or perhaps in some form of a dedicated life in the Church. There are young men and women all over the world who are hearing God's invitation to serve Him in a special way. You may be still in school or you may already have started a professional career. God's call is not limited. Men and women who are already working in a profession or a business may very well be hearing God's call also, to leave what they are doing, and follow Him along a special path. If we think about it, we all know of young men and women in the military who are serving our country in very self-sacrificing ways. There are also many seminaries and religious orders of both men and women that are experiencing tremendous growth, not only in numbers, but in the quality of the young men and women who are joining them.

All that being said, our Faith tells us that by our baptism we are all baptized into the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. In the Sacrament of Confirmation we have all been anointed by the Holy Spirit to bring Christ into our lives and into the world that surrounds us. Those are not just pretty words. Those are challenging words. Being a priest or a sister is not easy. Bringing Christ's message to those around us is not easy. We actually will prefer to let others do God's work. God is calling us to bring His presence to individuals, something we can only do individually and personally.

So we need to remember, that the call of Jesus to a few fishermen that we just heard about in today Gospel is not a call that was issued only to twelve men over 2,000 years ago. It is a persistent, urgent call, a demanding call that comes down to us through 2,000 years in this

Church, and is ongoing. It's a special call to those who have been asked by God to receive the Bread of Life from this altar, and then to leave this church building on a mission.

For the simple truth is that when we do decide to change our life, and do something special, we have already begun to change the whole world. So we need to ask God and decide what we are seeking? What is God whispering to us deep down inside? To what and to whom will we want to give our life? The scripture for this Third Sunday in Ordinary time is all about following our call and making a difference.

Can we do that today?