

5th Sunday of the Year C

*Master we worked hard all night long
and caught nothing,
but if you say so, I will pay out the nets. (Lk 5:5)*



First Reading

Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year of king Uzziah's death I saw the Lord seated on a high throne; his train filled the sanctuary; above him stood seraphs, each one with six wings. And they cried out one to another in this way, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. His glory fills the whole earth."

The foundations of the threshold shook with the voice of the one who cried out, and the Temple was filled with smoke. I said: "What a wretched state I am in! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have looked at the King, the Lord of hosts."

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding in his hand a live coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. With this he touched my mouth and said: "See now, this has touched your lips, your sin is taken away, your iniquity is purged." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: "Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?" I answered, "Here I am, send me."

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:3-8.11

In the first place, I taught you what I had been taught myself, namely that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; and that he was raised to life on the third day, in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared first to Cephas and secondly to the Twelve. Next he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died; then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles; and last of all he appeared to me too; it was as though I was born when no one expected it. But what matters is that I preach what they preach, and this is what you all believed.

Jesus was standing one day by the lake of Gennesaret, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the word of God, when he caught sight of two boats close to the bank. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats – it was Simon's – and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

When he had finished speaking he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch." "Master," Simon replied "we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets." And when they had done this they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, so they signalled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them; when these came, they filled the two boats to sinking point.

When Simon Peter saw this he fell at the knees of Jesus saying, "Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man." For he and all his companions were completely overcome by the catch they had made; so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. But Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on it is men you will catch." Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him.

Meditation

Two boats move slowly toward shore, laden with freshly caught fish. At the end of a fruitless night, the disciples had taken in an exceptional catch. This augurs well for the future which the Lord announces to these potential fishers of humanity who are ready to leave everything to follow him.

It is not without reason that Luke has grouped together the call of the first disciples and the episode of the miraculous catch. Under his pen the past of Jesus' ministry and the present of the Church's mission run together. The primitive community, born at Pentecost, pursues the proclamation of the gospel. The risen One continues his preaching through the voice of those whom he has chosen. The result is like an abundant catch of fish.

"Put out into deep water and lower your nets!" If Jesus sends his followers to fish for people, it is because they themselves have been caught in the net of his word. They must therefore set out on the adventure of faith, accept the risk of casting off, leave the security of a sheltered port to go beyond what is foreseeable and reasonable wherever the Spirit blows. After having been fish, they must become fishers in their turn, without fear of suffering. True apostles, they must be ready to signal their companions in the other boat to come to their aid. In these times of crisis when there is a great temptation to hold onto everything we believe to be in danger, faith must more than ever be a daring putting out into deep water.

5th Sunday of the Year C

*Master we worked hard all night long
and caught nothing,
but if you say so, I will pay out the nets. (Lk 5:5)*



First Reading

Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year of king Uzziah's death I saw the Lord seated on a high throne; his train filled the sanctuary; above him stood seraphs, each one with six wings. And they cried out one to another in this way, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. His glory fills the whole earth."

The foundations of the threshold shook with the voice of the one who cried out, and the Temple was filled with smoke. I said: "What a wretched state I am in! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have looked at the King, the Lord of hosts."

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding in his hand a live coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. With this he touched my mouth and said: "See now, this has touched your lips, your sin is taken away, your iniquity is purged." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: "Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger?" I answered, "Here I am, send me."

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, the gospel that you received and in which you are firmly established; because the gospel will save you only if you keep believing exactly what I preached to you – believing anything else will not lead to anything.

Well then, in the first place, I taught you what I had been taught myself, namely that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; and that he was raised to life on the third day, in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared first to Cephas and secondly to the Twelve. Next he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died; then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles; and last of all he appeared to me too; it was as though I was born when no one expected it.

I am the least of the apostles; in fact, since I persecuted the Church of God, I hardly deserve the name apostle; but by God's grace that is what I am, and the grace that he gave me has not been fruitless. On the contrary, I, or rather the grace of God that is with me, have worked harder than any of the others; but what matters is that I preach what they preach, and this is what you all believed.

Jesus was standing one day by the lake of Gennesaret, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the word of God, when he caught sight of two boats close to the bank. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats – it was Simon's – and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

When he had finished speaking he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch." "Master," Simon replied "we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets." And when they had done this they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, so they signalled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them; when these came, they filled the two boats to sinking point.

When Simon Peter saw this he fell at the knees of Jesus saying, "Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man." For he and all his companions were completely overcome by the catch they had made; so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. But Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on it is men you will catch." Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him.

Meditation

Two boats move slowly toward shore, laden with freshly caught fish. At the end of a fruitless night, the disciples had taken in an exceptional catch. This augurs well for the future which the Lord announces to these potential fishers of humanity who are ready to leave everything to follow him.

It is not without reason that Luke has grouped together the call of the first disciples and the episode of the miraculous catch. Under his pen the past of Jesus' ministry and the present of the Church's mission run together. The primitive community, born at Pentecost, pursues the proclamation of the gospel. The risen One continues his preaching through the voice of those whom he has chosen. The result is like an abundant catch of fish.

"Put out into deep water and lower your nets!" If Jesus sends his followers to fish for people, it is because they themselves have been caught in the net of his word. They must therefore set out on the adventure of faith, accept the risk of casting off, leave the security of a sheltered port to go beyond what is foreseeable and reasonable wherever the Spirit blows. After having been fish, they must become fishers in their turn, without fear of suffering. True apostles, they must be ready to signal their companions in the other boat to come to their aid. In these times of crisis when there is a great temptation to hold onto everything we believe to be in danger, faith must more than ever be a daring putting out into deep water.