

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.
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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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# Quick Connect

**What is the Gospel saying? Luke 5:1-11** — Pg. 1

**What is the Church saying Past and Present?** Pages 1-3

**What is God saying to you through this passage?** Page 4

## **Gospel Reading – Luke 5:1-11 – Roman Missal**

While the crowd was pressing in on Jesus and listening to the word of God, he was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret. He saw two boats there alongside the lake; the fishermen had disembarked and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, he asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." Simon said in reply, "Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets." When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish and their nets were tearing. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come to help them. They came and filled both boats so that the boats were in danger of sinking. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." For astonishment at the catch of fish they had made seized him and all those with him, and likewise James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners of Simon. Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him.

## **Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time - Cycle C**

From an explanation of Paul's letter to the Galatians by Saint Augustine, bishop

*Let us understand the workings of God's grace*

Paul writes to the Galatians to make them understand that by God's grace they are no longer under the law. When the Gospel was preached to them, there were some among them of Jewish origin known as circumcisers—though they called themselves Christians—who did not grasp the gift they had received. They still wanted to be under the burden of the law. Now God had imposed that burden on those who were slaves to sin and not on servants of justice. That is to say, God had given a just law to unjust men in order to show them their sin, not to take it away. For sin is taken away only by the gift of faith that works through love. The Galatians had already received this gift, but the circumcisers claimed that the Gospel would not save them unless they underwent circumcision and were willing to observe also the other traditional Jewish rites.

The Galatians, therefore, began to question Paul's preaching of the Gospel because he did not require Gentiles to follow Jewish observances as

other apostles had done. Even Peter had yielded to the scandalized protests of the circumcisers. He pretended to believe that the Gospel would not save the Gentiles unless they fulfilled the burden of the law. But Paul recalled him from such dissimulation, as is shown in this very same letter. A similar issue arises in Paul's letter to the Romans, but with an evident difference. Through his letter to them Paul was able to resolve the strife and controversy that had developed between the Jewish and Gentile converts.

In the present letter Paul is writing to persons who were profoundly influenced and disturbed by the circumcisers. The Galatians had begun to believe them and to think that Paul had not preached rightly, since he had not ordered them to be circumcised. And so the Apostle begins by saying: *I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting him who called you to the glory of Christ, and turning to another gospel.* After this there comes a brief introduction to the point at issue. But remember in the very opening of the letter Paul had said that he was an apostle *not from men nor by any man*, a statement that does not appear in any other letter of his. He is making it quite clear that the circumcisers, for their part, are not from God but from men, and that his authority in preaching the Gospel must be considered equal to that of the other apostles. For he was called to be an apostle *not from men nor by any man*, but through God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ.

### **Fishers of Men – Lesson and Discussion**

*“from now on you will be catching men”*

**Why did Christ teach from Peter's ship?** Peter was selected to be the rock on which Jesus built His church. Here, Jesus is literally standing on this “rock” teaching the truth. “By this He showed that the true doctrine is preached only from that Church of which Peter is the head (Jn. 21:15), which is here represented by his ship. Amid storms of persecution Jesus has preserved and will preserve this ship, His Church, until the end of time. (Mt. 16:18). Peter still guides the bark in the unbroken line of his successors, and Jesus still teaches from this ship the same doctrine through the bishops and priests, as His co-operators, with whom He has promised to remain to the end of the world (Mt. 28:20).”[1]

**Why was it that Peter and his assistants were able to catch so many fish after catching nothing all day?** They first caught no fish because they were throwing out their nets in confidence that they would be able to catch fish by relying on their own talents, instead of the Lord. St. Ambrose said, “This example proves how vain and fruitless is presumptuous confidence, and how powerful, on the contrary, is humility, since those who had previously labored without success, filled their nets at the word of the Redeemer.’ Let us learn from this our inability, that we begin our work only with God, that is, with confidence in His help, and with the intention of working only for love of Him, and for His honor. If we do this, the blessing of the Lord will not be wanting.”[2]

In the Gospel it says Jesus saw two boats and that He got into one of the boats. For fishermen, their boats are their livelihood. Jesus sees our lives and makes a conscience act of will to enter into our lives. He chooses us. Will we choose Him? **What is important in our lives, what is our boat?** Just as Jesus changed water (human effort) into wine (divine intervention) at the Wedding at Cana, Jesus shows us again through the miraculous catch of fish that human efforts are in vain without divine intervention. . Through Christ, the natural becomes supernatural. Any catch can be turned into a “great number of fish” through Christ's intervention and will.

At the end of the Gospel, the Apostles “left everything and followed him”. Jesus comes into our boats, our lives, but ultimately asks us to trust in Him and leave our boats, our lives, behind for a Life in Him. We leave our small boats of selfishness and isolation to enter into the fullness of the Ark of Peter (the Church), the boat given us by Christ. It takes trust to leave “our boat” behind. We can live in the shallow waters of life, with our conversations, friendships, routines, but Christ asks us to leave this shallowness and “put out into deep water”. Jesus knows that “put[ting] out into the deep” is scary for the Apostles and for us, so He consoles us to “be not afraid”.

**What does the net represent?** The net represents Christ and His Church. St. Ambrose says, “The word of truth which, so to speak, forms the net-work of gospel preaching with which the successors of the apostles, the bishops and priests, draw souls from the darkness of error to the light of truth, and from the depths of the abyss to raise them to heaven.”[3]

**Why do the Apostles' call to their partners for help?** The Apostles call for help because they cannot get the all fish by themselves. Similarly, by analogy, our priests today are not alone in bringing the good news to everyone. We too must also draw men and women into the church. Lastly, we are called to labor, fast, pray, and perform other good works for us and the whole world.[4]

**Why did Jesus choose poor and illiterate fishermen to be His Apostles?** Jesus wanted to show that the Catholic Church was not founded or proliferated solely through man, but of God. If we really consider the reality of these men's lack of education and spiritual training, “how could it be possible, without the evident assistance of God, that poor, illiterate fishermen could overthrow proud paganism, and bring nations to receive the doctrine of the crucified God-Man Jesus, who to the Jews was an abomination, to the Gentiles a folly!”[5]