

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 they 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.

Introductory Prayer: Lord, as we begin this meditation, I feel you have stepped into my boat. I put out a short distance from shore, away from all my daily concerns, to listen to you alone. It is just you and I, and I sense that you are going to ask something of me. I am truly humbled and grateful that you would spend so much personal time with me.

Petition: Christ, help me to understand and embrace your call to holiness for me.

1. Teacher: Jesus taught by the lake. We know that he taught in many other places too: in the Temple, in synagogues, on mountains, among children. Today he had a great

crowd around him by the lake. For these people, the lake was everything: water, food, transportation, an object of beauty and contemplation. Yet beneath its usually still and deep blue surface, there was a whole other world unknown to them. How appropriate that next to it, Christ, who could probe its depths, uncovered for them the many mysteries of faith and the divine plan! He can help us understand so many things that are a part of our daily lives, yet in many ways remain unfamiliar or unintelligible to us.

2. Leader: It is one thing to get the curious crowds to give you a moment of their attention, but quite another to motivate people to give you their dedication and their life. Christ knew that to get someone to commit, directing an interesting story to the general public would not be enough. Personal attention was in order. Christ stepped into Peter's boat and asked him for a favor, a simple task: "Put out a short distance from the shore." Christ's first tasks are usually not that hard for us to execute: simply material compliance and a little generosity. But if we let him ride with us long enough, he will eventually ask us for something that demands faith and may go against our reason or personal comfort. We want Christ to win us over for good, but how can he do so if we don't let him take us for a ride "out into the deep?"

3. Motivator: Do I get surprised when Christ does something marvelous in my life? Does astonishment seize me? Maybe I'm not surprised. Maybe I am thinking what is good or successful in me originates from myself. Proud is the person who thinks so. Proud, too, is the person who recognizes the hand of God and nevertheless responds, "Leave me Lord, for I am a sinful man." Christ just performed a miracle through the obedience of a sinful man; why can't he do it again? Why do I respond, "Leave me, Lord," unless I'm not ready to obey? When I call my partners to come over and check it out, do I do so to allow this experience of Christ to touch others? Or do I do so to help them see how greatly endowed I am? If I am to become a fisher of men like Peter, I, too, must purify myself from these all-too-human reactions. Don't worry, my pettiness doesn't faze Christ. Listen to him: "Do not be afraid. You will become…"

Conversation with Christ: So many souls are hustling through this world without knowing where they are going and without enjoying your friendship as I do. I do not know if you want to reach many or few of them through me, but I think they are many. My heart is ready, O Lord. Fill me with apostolic zeal.

Resolution: I will work on being a good and positive motivator today.