

4<sup>th</sup> before Lent 2019 Luke 5:1-11

Do you like fishing? My children used to like going out fishing on their grandfather's boat. They were often disappointed that they did not catch but were very pleased when they did.

Jesus was trying to teach the people on the shore, but it must have been very crowded, because when Jesus saw two boats nearby, he recognized that one of them belonged to Simon Peter. Jesus asked to come aboard. Then he and his disciples moved out from the shore where Jesus could speak to the people who were crowding along the shore to hear him.

After Jesus finished speaking, he told Simon Peter, "Put out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch." (vs. 4) Simon Peter responded a bit halfheartedly. He and the others had been fishing all night and hadn't caught anything. Peter really didn't want to go fishing again, but because Jesus asked him, Peter went farther out on the lake. What do you think happened then? Did they catch any fish?

Yes! The nets in both of the boats were so full that when the disciples pulled in the nets, the huge load of fish threatened to sink both boats.

When they got back to the shore, Peter fell on his knees in front of Jesus. Peter didn't feel worthy even to stand up near Jesus. He—and also James and John, who were Peter's partners on the fishing boats—were very surprised at the large catch.

But Jesus had a different kind of work for these men to do—and so he said, "From now on you will be catching people." (vs. 10) Doesn't that sound strange? Jesus was telling his disciples that they would be fishing for people.

What does that mean?

It means that they would do that by sharing God's love with people, and helping them to understand how much Jesus loved them. Just as these fishermen had once brought fish into their boats, they would now focus on bringing people in the kingdom of God.

The Bible tells us that Peter, James and John left their boats and followed Jesus. They were ready to go fishing for people.

This week has been Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. Children have been asked to look out for each other, to look out for things that might suggest

that something is wrong. A bit like fishing for people in order to help them. In Christian terms, fishing for people is about living out our faith by our personal example- by being kind and caring- by asking ourselves. What would Jesus do if he found himself in the situation that we might find ourselves in? That is what fishing for people is all about.

PRAYER: God, thank you that Simon Peter, James and John learned to fish for people. Help us to share your love with people around us, too. Thank you that you care for us and because of Jesus, we can show others your love.

Amen.