

Reflection questions for Luke 5:1-11

General Insights

- This passage recounts the conversion of Peter, and the process we all must go through where we first listen to Jesus's teaching but it does not really affect the direction of our life until Jesus enters our life and we at some point recognize him as Lord and confess our sins and follow him.
- On a symbolic level, this passage represents the church as the boat and Peter as the first Pope and the role of the church as fishers of people directed ultimately by Jesus. Strengthening the validity of a symbolic interpretation, it is interesting to note that a very similar passage exists after Jesus's resurrection in John chapter 21.

Questions for individual reflection.

Placing yourself in the place of Peter, cleaning the nets and the boat after a night of fishing you are doing a task you have done many times before, a task that is tedious. While you're doing it you have one eye on the activity happening on the shore, Jesus teaching the crowd:

- What might be some of your thoughts feelings about seeing this person drawing so much attention from a crowd? What might he be talking about? Don't these people have work they're supposed to be doing? Where do they get the time and luxury to listen to this man?
- Then Jesus gets into your boat how do you respond? What are your thoughts and feelings? Do you welcome him, or resist him?
- He asks you to stop what you are doing and put out a few feet from shore. How dare he? I'm not sure if I want to do this! Doesn't he see that I'm doing important work don't have time for this? Do you do it? Why or why not?
- After you put out a few feet from shore you are now captive in the boat, no longer able to keep working like you were and forced to listen. Do you feel tricked? Do you feel trapped? Are you wasting your time? Are you frustrated, angry, impatient, or are you able to listen?
- What is this man saying to the crowd? Is it relevant to you? Is his message for the people? Or does it also speak to you?
- Now this man stops talking to the people, and turns to talk to you! He tells you to put out into the deep water and prepare to cast your nets (the ones you just cleaned!) Additionally you are an experienced fisherman, you know your trade and you've worked all night and have caught nothing, who is this

person not even a fisherman telling me to do such a thing? Why am I wasting my time? This seems to make no sense, why should I do it? Is there perhaps anything that Jesus is telling you in your life, that you feel makes no sense?

- Now despite how crazy all this seemed, what do you think when you see the miraculous catch? Are there times in your life when you've seen a similar miraculous intervention by God? What would you want to say to Jesus at this point if this really happened to you? Would the miracle have a message in your life?
- Peter's response is to fall to his knees and say leave me Lord for I am a sinner. Have you ever felt this way or spoke this way to the Lord? Why do you think Peter responds this way? Any idea of what his sin may have been? What are the sins keeping you from recognizing the Lord in your life?
- After this miracle Peter and his companions leave everything and follow Jesus. Have you done similarly? How could anyone do such a thing?
- Where in this story do you best fit regarding your current relationship with Jesus? Are you watching him preach to others from a distance, as more of an observer? Has he entered your life and having some influence, but you are resisting or partially following? Is he inviting you to go deeper? Have you recognized him as Lord and surrendered your life to him? Have you dropped your nets and followed him?