

5 OTC.19; Isa6:1-8; 1Cor 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11; ***Risk a little more***

On Groundhog Day 2019, *Punxsutawney Phil* could not find his shadow. And as the legend goes, this means we're in for an early spring. This is only the 19th time out of 123 in his recorded history that Phil hasn't been able to find his shadow. Even so, Phil is usually wrong, and meteor-

-ologists aren't too sure Phil's suspicions are right either. It's hard to imagine that spring is right around the corner after *the polar vortex* this past week,

... but we'll just have to wait and see. Wikipedia.com

Do you really plan your life this way?

February 2nd is also *the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple* where we are called to follow Jesus, who is the

... “*light to the Gentiles and the glory of Israel*”.

Apparently, at least for this year, Phil and the Scriptures are in agreement!

We cannot hibernate from the challenges of life!

We are called to do something more!

We are called to trust in our God to awaken our gifts of loving, sacrificial service to one another.

We are called to an awakening moment today....

Are you putting God on hold?

Are you feeling not quite ‘good enough’ to take up a vocation or a ministry?

You are in good company – ***Isaiah, Peter, Paul***, and many more have felt

... exactly the same way! Listen to the Scriptures:

Isaiah: ***“For I am a man of unclean lips....”***

Peter: ***“Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.”***

Paul: ***“For I am the least of the apostles/because I persecuted the church.”***

What could any of us possibly do for Christ?

When was the last time God got your attention? Have you found yourself almost speechless because you had come *face-to-face* with some manifestation of God’s love or power? Was it in the Scripture, a beautiful sunrise or the birth of a new life into the world?

These are special *awakening moments* that change our lives.

Today’s gospel shows us one such moment. **Simon, James, and John** have worked all night and have not caught any fish. As they return to shore, they encounter Jesus who ***asks their help*** in order to get into a better location for teaching the crowds. Once Jesus has finished teaching, he asks them to move their boat into *deeper water* so that they might attempt another catch.

“We have worked hard all night and caught nothing, but at your command...”... (dead tired, why not humor this land-lover!)

These three fishermen have no idea that their lives are about to be

... drastically changed through Jesus’ seemingly simple request.

2 As they begin to grasp *the magnitude* of the catch, **Simon, James, and John** are astonished *by what Jesus has done for them*. But there is

... no indication of the life-changing event that is yet to come.

It is with Jesus’ dramatic announcement, ***“Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people,”*** that the awakening takes place. They now realize what their life’s work is meant to be. As this realization takes hold, they willingly leave their old lives behind and choose to follow Jesus as his disciples. *That same decision is required of us if we are to take up our life’s work as disciples of Jesus.* What are we prepared to leave behind this day?

Perhaps the greatest event in this gospel passage is not so much the large catch of fish, but ***the awareness*** of the disciples that they are to be a part of

... something greater than themselves.

What about us in the here and now?

We encountered Jesus by the waters of our Baptism, just as the disciples encountered Jesus by the waters of the Sea of Galilee. Like them we are called to put out a ***short distance*** into ***deep water, to risk a little more***

- believing in Jesus as much as Jesus believes in us!

Having a relationship with God is not reserved for prophets and saints. God wishes to connect with each of us. Our stories may not be as dramatic as the biblical ones recounted today, but each of us has a *unique* salvation history.

Are we attentive to *the awaking moments* in our lives?

This is a recent PBS story. There are more than 100,000 people in this country waiting for a kidney transplant, & the median wait time is more than 3 years. A Nobel Prize-winning economist has a solution: *kidney transplant chains*. It starts with a donor giving to a stranger with nothing guaranteed in return. And the momentum builds. Enter 26 y.o. Eric Walano who gives blood regularly. About a year ago he went to a charity *organ donation Gala*.

He turned to his parents and said, “*I was like, kidney donation, I can do that.*” And they said, “*you're crazy and probably a little bit drunk. What if, God forbid, something happens to your other kidney down the road?*” A month later at St. Barnabas Hospital ***Eric*** donated a kidney. In December, he was allowed to meet his kidney's new owner, & the entire transplant chain ***his gift*** had set in motion. The man he helped said, “*I am so grateful. It's just so unfathomable that you would go through this process of having the*

... surgery and the recovery time for a complete stranger.”

(Paul Solman. PBS.Feb. 7, 2019.weekly series *Making Sense*.)

At this Liturgy of our Mission, let us trust in the call of God and cast aside our doubts about being able to serve alongside ***the Christ*** and dare to ***“put out into deeper waters”***. What can YOU do for ***the Christ*** today?

Probably more than you can ever imagine !!!