

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR C

1. Most of us do not see ourselves as being important in God's plan
 - a. We have our ordinary habits and routines, jobs to make a living, time to relax
 - b. We get comfortable doing things the same way, week after week, day after day
 - i. Maybe look for a little excitement on vacations
 - ii. Probably do not want to make real changes to our life
 - c. The apostles in the gospel must have been like that
 - d. They made their living by fishing,
 - i. probably disappointed after a night of fishing that caught nothing
 - ii. Part of risk of being a fisherman, try tomorrow
2. Meet Jesus, probably heard about Him attracting crowds with preaching and healing
 - a. He tells them to go out into the deep and drop their nets there
 - b. Could have been insulted, a carpenter, a preacher telling them to go back out
 - c. Imagine them tired, disappointed
 - d. Something compelling about Jesus, Simon: we been fishing all night but if you say so
 - e. When they go out suddenly so much fish, tearing nets
 - f. Fear and awesomeness feeling, this man is more than he appears
 - g. Fear in Peter's voice: Leave me Lord I am a sinful man
3. Fear that Isaiah has when he has the vision of God in heaven surrounded by the angels
 - a. When they sing praise to God, their voices have the power of earthquakes or volcanoes
 - b. The door shakes, the house is filled with smoke
 - c. Isaiah is afraid, he sees himself as so unworthy, that he will die seeing God
 - d. But God purifies his lips with a burning ember, your sinfulness is removed
4. Paul speaks of the wonder that Jesus appeared to him while Paul was in the act of persecuting the church
 - a. Think what it must have been like, struck blind, why are you persecuting me
 - b. God sends him out to preach the good news that Jesus is alive and wants to give us that same life
5. Important thing is that these are stories of ordinary people, not that different from us
 - a. They are going about their ordinary lives, doing what they think is right
 - b. Suddenly somehow God breaks through the fog of routines and habits
 - c. He appears to them with a power that is frightening
 - d. All say I am not worthy, I don't deserve to see you, to experience you, go away
 - e. Notice how God and Jesus effectively do not worry about fears
 - f. I can make you clean and I have a job for you
 - i. Isaiah is sent to be a prophet to Israel, Peter, James and John be fishers of men
 - ii. Paul proclaims to Gentiles that Jesus is risen
 - g. Each of them is given the challenge, not just to believe in Jesus but to make their faith visible
6. Hearing these words of Scripture might make us a little nervous
 - a. God is speaking to us here and now
 - b. Because of our weakness and fear, he uses human voices and natural things like water, oil bread, wine
 - c. He is just as much speaking to us as He did to Isaiah, Paul, Peter, James and John
 - d. Like them we want to say Lord I am not worthy, talk to someone else
7. He continues to speak to you and to me, telling us He has chosen us each of us for a mission
 - a. Mission will probably be unique for each of us
 - b. Maybe He wants us to spend more time in prayer
 - c. Perhaps there is someone we know who needs some skill of ours
 - d. Maybe we need to encourage our representatives to offer justice to the poor and needy rather than pander to the wealthy and influential
 - e. Maybe we are called to be more active in our church or in the community
8. We are entering the season of Lent, this is our chance to listen carefully to what God may be asking of us
 - a. There is probably some fear about having to stretch ourselves beyond what we have been comfortable
 - b. We may want to say to God I am not good enough person to do that job, it will be too hard
 - c. What happens if it does not work, that I do not succeed
 - d. God will say do not worry about success or worthiness, that is God's problem for choosing us
 - e. The real question needs to be what do I want to say to God when I face Him at the moment of death

- f. Do I really want to say I was too scared to change so I refused to listen to you
- g. Or can we say God I tried, I probably failed in many ways but I did my best to do your will.