

HOMILY FOR 3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1. Jesus begins his ministry not in Rome, not even in Jerusalem
 - a. He goes up to Capernaum on the north side of the Sea of Galilee,
 - i. Beyond the Jordan river in the lands of Zebulon and Naphtali
 - ii. Backwater provinces, when Isaiah writes they are occupied by Assyrians
 - iii. Time of darkness but Isaiah says God will bring light to darkness
 - iv. The nations will see a great light shining from you
 - b. Reason for going up there
 - i. Safer John Baptist has been beheaded.
 - ii. Fertile ground for preaching because further away from power centers
 - iii. Matthew suggests also it fulfills promise of Isaiah, Jesus is light to nations shining in midst of upper Galilee
2. As Jesus begins his preaching in Capernaum, he comes across two brothers Simon and Andrew
 - a. He invites them to follow Him to become fishers of men
 - b. Later he finds James and John and also invites them to follow
 - c. Each of these Matthew says: they leave their boats and follow Jesus
3. Sounds surprising on face of gospel
 - a. Gospel of John suggests that Andrew had been introduced to Jesus by the Baptist
 - b. Andrew introduced Peter to Jesus
 - c. Now Jesus offers an invitation to both
 - d. Up to now fishing has been center of your life
 - e. I am inviting you to become fishers of men, I want you to follow and learn from me
 - f. Fishing may still have been used to support their families as we know Simon Peter had a mother-in-law whom Jesus cured
 - g. Instead of worrying about being successful fisherman, they realize that they are called to more important things
 - i. They need to learn from Jesus preaching so that they can go out and proclaim the gospel as well
 - ii. But much of the time they probably will do ordinary work as a means of connecting with people around them
4. At Mass Jesus comes to us many times and invites us to follow Him
 - a. We may easily feel torn, how do we follow Him and keep up with our jobs, our families, our communities

- b. So many things demand our time and energy
 - c. I do not think this has to be an either or question, it is a matter of sorting out our priorities
 - d. How do we put Jesus first in our life, and everything else second
 - e. Temptation is to give God our leftovers, find a spare moment to pray
 - f. Go to church when it is convenient
5. Promise that Jesus gives with His call is that when we put Him first, he will give us energy and life needed to fulfill the important things in life.
- a. Simple example might be for many people, impatience with their families is a problem
 - b. Impatience often is caused by feeling stressed out with all the demands on our lives
 - c. Finding a few minutes for prayer and silence with God can provide a break from the stress and give us the opportunity to be more attentive to the family
6. Society itself is suggesting that we need to get away from busy routine
- a. I hear the term intentional living
 - b. We have to quiet our minds so that we become aware of what is important to us
 - c. Some in the world are re-discovering what Jesus tells us
 - i. Prayer is not really a burden, it is actually healthy and helpful
7. There are many other benefits to putting Jesus first
- a. Honesty is good for society
 - b. Loving our neighbor frees us from obsessions and worries about ourselves
8. Ultimately Jesus wants us to follow Him so that we might be witnesses to his love
- a. By committing ourselves to put Jesus first in our life, the world itself may follow and bring the peace that we all long for