

Pastoral Message: February 6, 2022

The theme of our scriptures this weekend could be, “God does not call the qualified, but God qualifies the called.” I find it encouraging that in our scriptures God does not call perfect people. We see three characters in today’s scriptures that remind us of that. We get Isaiah who says, “woe is me, I share in the collective guilt of my people.” We get Paul who murdered followers of Jesus before his experience of grace. We get Peter who we know denied Christ and we see mistakes he made along the way. These characters did not let that hold them back. They trusted in the grace of God, and the Lord did extraordinary things through them. Jesus pulls so close to us in today’s scripture. He comes right onto Peter’s boat. Peter must have been astounded by Jesus’ preaching because as a fisherman he trusted this young carpenter and took the risk to lower the nets. Peter, amazed at this miracle and the catch of fish, tells the Lord to go away from him. Jesus meets him there, calls him, just as he is, to follow. This is a good lesson for all of us, that feelings of unworthiness or past mistakes are not an obstacle to Jesus calling us forward to respond to the call. This is also what I believe synodality is about—calling ordinary men and women to do extraordinary things. Jesus did not seem interested in calling experts, because often times experts have all the answers. Jesus called people who were open to taking risks, trying something new, and growing along the way. Jesus also realized that it would be ordinary people that would be able to attract people to the message because they could identify with their gifts and deficiencies. Here at St Agnes, we want to create an atmosphere where everyone feels that their gifts are important and, by grace, have been equipped to carry out the mission. These disciples, it says that they left everything and followed Jesus. In our scripture study the insight was that they did not just leave physical things behind but they took the risk to let go of emotional baggage or feelings of inadequacy and to humbly follow the Lord. Perhaps this is our call as well.