

Dear Padre,

I heard some people talking about the coming of the Antichrist. Who or what is this Antichrist?

Some Christian sects believe there will come a point when the faithful of their church will be taken off the earth and whisked into heaven. This is usually referred to as “the rapture.” After this event, they believe the Antichrist will come. This Antichrist is an individual man who will incarnate in himself the power of Satan. He will deceive even the holiest person and will rule the entire world. It is believed that Jesus will then return and defeat this Antichrist in the ultimate battle between good and evil. The appearance of the Antichrist supposedly coincides with the end of time.

Most of the material that would support this scenario is found in the thirteenth chapter of the Book of Revelation. Here the devil tries to stop Christ’s victory and to convince people that Christ is not the master. This chapter of Revelation deals with the conflict in the Roman Empire between the emperor Nero and the faithful Christians. Nero, the evil one, is assigned the number 666 so Christians could refer to him without openly attacking him. This section of the book was written to give hope to persecuted Christians.

Instead of worrying about the end of time, an Antichrist, a final battle, and “evil” numbers, Catholics are encouraged to believe that Christ has already conquered sin, death, and Satan. God’s reign is already here in our midst (see Luke 17:20–21). Our task is to prepare for our own moment of dying and meeting the Lord. We leave the rest to God’s providence!

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A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

We can make many pastoral plans, conceive of new methods for drawing people close, but if we don't take the path of God who has come in the flesh...then we are not on the path of the good spirit. [Instead, what prevails] is the Antichrist, worldliness, the spirit of the world.

MORNING MEDITATION, JANUARY 7, 2016



Our Parish Community

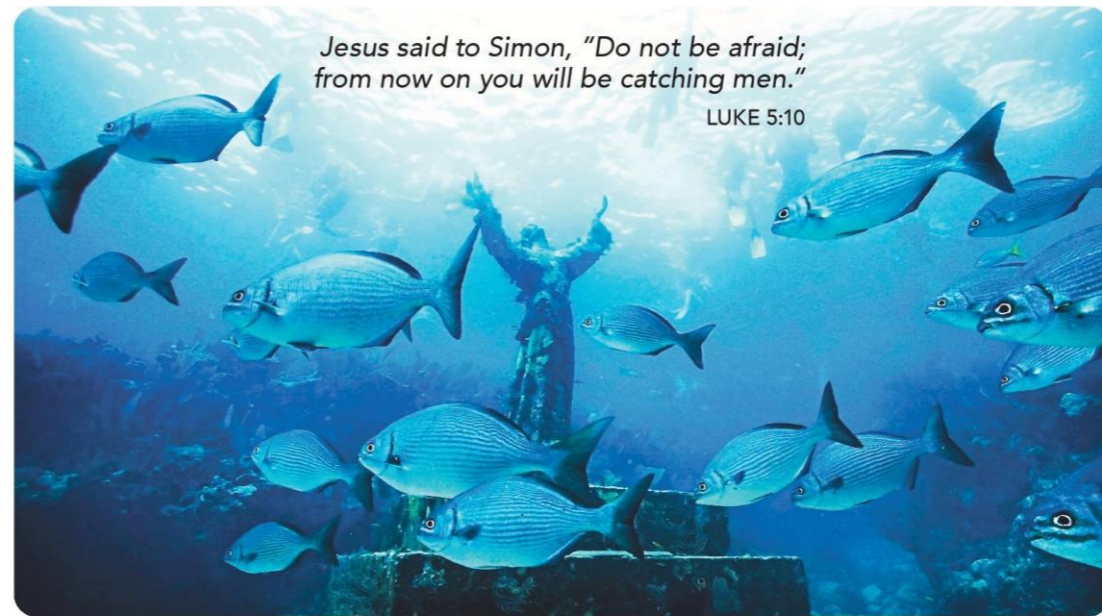
February 6, 2022

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Is 6:1–2a, 3–8

1 Cor 15:1–11 or 15:3–8, 11

Lk 5:1–11



Whom Shall I Send?

This could very well be called **Mission Sunday**—not because there is a second collection, but because today’s readings challenge us to examine how we have responded to being called and sent.

Isaiah recounts a religious experience he had while in the Temple. Most majestic of all aspects of that vision was the voice that spoke to him. He heard the words, “Whom shall I send?” (Isaiah 6:8). Send where? To do what? Presumably it meant: “Whom shall I send to speak my word to the people?” The eagerness of the prophet is remarkable: “Here I am...send me!” This passage describes Isaiah’s call to ministry, to be God’s prophet to the people.

The Gospel reading reports another call—that of Peter, James, and John. After showing that he was able to fill the nets of these fishermen, even to the breaking point, Jesus offered them the opportunity to

attract (catch) men and women. Again, almost without thinking, “they left everything and followed him” (Luke 5:11).

In his First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul explains to the “fish” (his converts) how this message is communicated, how fish are caught, how the gospel is preached: “I handed on to you...what I also received” (1 Corinthians 15:3). In all cases, the message is basically the same: “I will be your God and you will be my people.” This is what we’ve all been called to experience, then sent to proclaim—first Isaiah, then the disciples, then Paul, and now you and me.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- ★ *In which life circumstances have you been called to be a disciple of Jesus?*
- ★ *How might you spread the Good News of God’s love to others in your life?*