

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 5:1-11

And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon Him to hear the word of God, He stood by the lake of Gennesaret, And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him (KJV)

Holy Fathers of the Seventh Council

John 17:1-13

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. (KJV)

Today's Gospel of St. Luke verifies the value of beginning each undertaking by listening to the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter and those with him had spent the whole night on their own fishing without success.

After listening to Jesus to try fishing again, Peter was successful to a degree that he became astonished. When he saw the results, Peter acknowledged the Lord and Peter declared his own sinfulness. James and John were equally affected.

Peter, James and John were so overtaken by the experience with the Lord Jesus Christ they left all and followed Him. Peter, James and John gave up their work as fishermen. They followed Jesus and became fishers of men.

Peter, James and John are convincing proof the personal experience with Jesus Christ is enriching and life-changing. Believers of every generation personally experience Jesus Christ in Holy Baptism.

The relationship with Jesus Christ established at Baptism is renewed during the course of life with Holy Confession and Holy Communion. Prayer, fasting and participating in the Divine services keep the relationship strong..

The relationship with Jesus Christ is the paramount relationship for believers. All other relationships are defined and exist according to the relationship with Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ's love for each believer is manifested in His death on the Cross and His glorious Resurrection. Today's Gospel from St. John contains Jesus' words as His earthly ministry draws to conclusion.

In the Gospel of St. John, Jesus speaks of His unity with God the Father and Jesus' love and care for His followers. Eternal life is a central theme in Jesus' words.

Serious believers have a clear interest in eternal life. Keeping Jesus Christ first and foremost in the heart, mind and soul are essential for eternal life. Recognizing, repelling and repenting of personal sin are needed for eternal life.

The Church fosters and encourages believers to repent. The Church nourishes and guides believers in the life in Jesus Christ from Baptism until departure from this life.

Hunger in the soul leads believers to the Church and keeps believers united with the Christ in the Church. Dangers and perils existing in the world constantly attempt to take believers away from the Church.

The mind, heart and soul are to be vigilantly guarded to keep the believer on the narrow path to eternal life and God's Kingdom. The proclamation of the Gospel at each Divine Liturgy serves to nourish and guide believers.

Partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ strengthens, fortifies and unites believers with Christ. Daily life in the world involves the constant battle against sin and temptations.

Daily life for serious believers includes the conscious unity with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Primary Goal and the Love of serious believers. Serious believers' love for Jesus Christ is manifested in all daily actions and relationships.

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