

## The Second Sunday after Pentecost

### Matthew 4:18-23

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. (KJV)

We gather today in God's Holy Church for the benefit of our soul and to seek the Kingdom of God. The Divine Liturgy is being celebrated for the benefit of our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and to glorify God.

The relationship we have with Jesus Christ is reflected in all that we think and do in life. Our relationship with Jesus Christ reveals the way we live out the time of life each day.

At Holy Baptism our total beings were dedicated to Jesus Christ. Our whole body was immersed in the Baptismal water and anointed with the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Church currently is in the period of the Apostles Fast. This is a time for renewal and strengthening of our relationship with Jesus Christ. The present Gospel describes the drawing power and authenticity of Jesus Christ.

Peter, Andrew, James and John immediately perceived and embraced the authenticity of Jesus Christ. They gave up everything to follow Christ. They gave up their work, where they lived and their families to follow Christ.

The Apostles Fast which began this past Monday and continues until the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul on July 12 is a time for personal analysis and reflection on our relationship with Jesus Christ.

This is a time to consider the Apostles' complete commitment to Christ and to measure our degree of commitment to following Christ. Now is the time to ask ourselves the extent our lives reflect a total commitment to Jesus Christ.

Do our personal values, thoughts and actions align with and reflect the values of Christ? Are the Kingdom of God and the salvation of our souls the first and guiding priorities of life?

This fasting period encourages and facilitates searching the heart, mind and soul to expel sinful tendencies and embrace the way of Jesus Christ. Now is this time to fully pursue the joy and peace found in Christ.

The American world is celebrating Father's Day. If we are fathers, it is appropriate to consider if we are fathers-in-Christ. Does our relationship with our sons and daughters reflect the values, teachings and love of Christ?

If we are sons and daughters, do we honor and show appreciation to our parents as Christ would have us to do? The Christian life carries the responsibility of Jesus Christ being lived out in daily life in our relationships.

Being a Christian is life's highest honor and an identity firmly united with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are blessed to have the opportunity to receive the Precious Body and Blood of Christ in the Divine Liturgy.

Being a Christian is to be taken most seriously and is to guide all that we think and do. Our goals, our work and our relationships are to align with Jesus Christ.

When we fail, we need to repent and begin anew in Christ. The Church gives us fasting periods to improve and make corrections and adjustments in the way we follow Christ.

The hunger in the soul is only authentically nourished in Jesus Christ. Peter, Andrew, James and John sensed in Christ what they needed most in life and they left all to follow him.

We are to leave behind those aspects of our lives which prevent us from fully following and honoring Christ. We made a complete commitment to Christ as King and God at Baptism.

Today let us measure whether we are honoring the commitment to Christ as King and as God. Repentance is always timely. Repentance is always beneficial. Christ is always ready to accept our confessions and willingness to follow Him.

Analysis of our relationship with Jesus Christ is essential throughout life if we are to grow in Christ. The Divine Liturgy facilitates growth and unity with Christ. The Gospel speaks to and enriches the heart, mind and soul.

God the Father cares for Creation and provides the essentials for the life in Christ. Each believer determines the degree of living in and commitment to following Christ.

Following Christ is completely voluntary and is an act of love. Christ's love for each person is always being revealed and manifested to the attentive. Believers reciprocate their love for Christ in the way they follow Him.

Thank God for the Church. Thank God for the Apostles' Fast. Thank God for the Gospel. Let us learn from the example of Peter, Andrew, James and John and follow Christ with our full beings.

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The Second Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Hieromartyr Dorotheus of Tyre. Venerable Peter of Korish. June 5/18, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.  
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