

JANUARY 22, 2017



THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



ISAIAH 8:23–9:3

PSALM 27:1, 4, 13–14

1 CORINTHIANS 1:10–13, 17

MATTHEW 4:12–23 OR 4:12–17

REFLECTION

Today's Gospel tells the story of four humble fishermen trying to earn a living by casting their nets into the sea. The fishermen had families of their own. Surely they had their own worries and struggles, concerns and failures. They were just ordinary men doing their jobs, when along came Jesus saying, "Come after me" (Matthew 4:19). What's remarkable is how they immediately followed Jesus. They didn't say, "Hey, I think you've got the wrong person, Jesus. If you only knew all the things I've done you wouldn't want me as your disciple." Nope. Jesus called them just as they were. Likewise, Jesus calls us just we are. Jesus wants us NOW. Constant conversion (changing for the better) is part of being a Catholic Christian, and we have to start somewhere. So drop your net (see Matthew 4:20)—your phone, your pride, your fear, or whatever's holding you back—and go follow Jesus.

ACTION

Think of some of the things you've done that you're not too proud of. Maybe you said something cruel. Maybe you acted selfishly or went along with the crowd instead of standing up for what was right. Maybe you drank too much or went too far. With shortcomings like these in mind, if Jesus came passing by, do you think he would invite you to follow him? Yes! Jesus would want you to follow him! The invitation is always there. Sometimes we get this idea in our heads that God only calls people who are perfect. Wrong. We fool ourselves into thinking that we need to change before God will love us or before we are good enough. But thinking like this is a trap, for we can only start where we're at in this moment, not where we think we should be in the future.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- Imagine that you are in the boat with Andrew and James when Jesus comes strolling by on the beach. Jesus calls you by name and says, "Come, follow me" (Matthew 4:19). What would it take to make you drop everything you were doing to go follow Jesus?
- Have you ever met someone so convincing that he or she could make you do otherwise crazy things? There are many different voices competing for our loyalty; whom we follow matters because it shapes who we will someday become. How do you know which voices to listen to and which ones to tune out?