Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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“Put out into the deep and lower your nets for a catch” (Luke 5:4).

1 Cor 3:18-23; Luke 5:1-11

In today’s Gospel, Jesus, a hill country carpenter, tells Peter, a professional fisherman, to take his boat out for a catch after he had already been on the water all night and caught nothing. The astonishing boatload of fish they caught had little to do with Jesus’ expertise about lakes and fishing. It was a theophany – one of those biblical moments that reveal God’s knowledge of the deep mysteries of creation. Peter falls to his knees because he knows he is in the presence of God.

Jesus does have one important skill fishermen also have: He can see beneath the surface – in this case, the deep, hidden state of Peter’s soul and his profound feeling of unworthiness and unreadiness to be involved with someone like Jesus. “Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.” But Jesus’ choice of Peter has everything to do with his potential for leadership based on his weaknesses. Only someone who needs mercy will be able to preach it.

Early morning prayer is our time to come clean and let God see us as we really are. The first impulse of shame, as illustrated by Adam and Eve in the garden after they

ate the forbidden fruit, is to hide. We cannot hide from God’s gaze, only fall to our knees before God’s overwhelming love, as Peter did.

But this is the beginning of our journey toward mercy. God sees our potential for growth and will always send us out into deeper and deeper water to share that grace with others. Peter the professional fisherman became a fisher of people. When we know our unworthiness, this is what God will ask us to do as well.

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