November 30, 2019

Scripture

Matthew 4:18-22
As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.

Our Scripture Reflection

How appropriate today’s Gospel text is as we begin tomorrow a whole new Church calendar year AND the holy season of Advent. In our Gospel, Jesus called the fishermen to follow Him and they left everything to do so. What will it take for us to do so? No PhD in religious studies, no special diet, no exercise regimen, no make-up or cosmetics, no fancy clothes, no cars or boats or special tools, no money….just a widely opened, loving and humble heart. Are you ready and willing???

Food for your Journey

Brian McLaren and Tony Campolo tell a parable of a boring, little town that decided to hold a footrace. On the appointed day, the runners showed up in all their athletic finery. The crowds gathered. But then, something very strange happened:
The runners took a step or two or three across the starting line, and then abruptly stopped. One man fell to his knees, crying, ‘I have crossed the starting line! This is the happiest day of my life!’ He repeated this again and again, and even began singing a song about how happy this day was for him.

Another woman started jumping for joy. ‘Yes!’ she shouted, raising her fist in the air. ‘I am a race-runner! I am finally a race-runner!’ She ran around jumping and dancing, getting and giving high-fives to others who shared her joy at being in the race.

Several people formed a circle and prayed, quietly thanking God for the privilege of crossing the starting line, and thanking God that they were not like the skeptics who didn’t come dressed for the race.”

The spectators, the authors say, were baffled by this strange behavior, but finally one observer turned to a neighbor and suggested that maybe they ought to get into the race. And so they did. Many others joined them:

“Soon many were kicking off their dress shoes, slipping out of their jackets, throwing all this unneeded clothing on the grass. And they ran — past the praying huddles and past the crying individuals and past the jumping high-fivers. And they found hope and joy in every step, and they grew stronger with every mile and hill. To their surprise, the path never ended — because in this race, there was no finish line. So they were never bored again.”

— Brian McLaren and Tony Campolo, Adventures in Missing the Point: How the Culture-Controlled Church Neutered the Gospel (Zondervan/Youth Specialties, 2006).

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, You are giving me a new year and the most holy season of Advent to start my Christian journey anew. As I make a special place in my life for You, help me to seek You and Your Gospel above everything. May I become in the new year the person You have created and redeemed me to be. Amen