

Discussion and Reflection Questions

Week beginning Sunday 6th of February 2022 (Epiphany 5C)

Getting started Questions:

- What stood out for you in the sermon or other spiritual input you heard, read or saw this week?
- What has been some of the challenges of the week just gone?
- Where have you seen God at work this week?

1st Reading: Isaiah 6.1-8

¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ² Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ And one called to another and said:

‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory.’

⁴ The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said: ‘Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’ ⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.

⁷ The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: ‘Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.’

⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’

Questions:

- Isaiah is very descriptive of God. How do you envisage God and how have the way's others have envisaged God helped or challenged you in the past?
- Isaiah's reflection on who God is caused both a sense of humility and availability. What do you think is the relationship between humility and availability in our response to God?
- In what ways might God be calling you to to serve in your community?

Psalm 138

¹ I will give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart:
even before the gods will I sing your praises.

² I will bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name:
because of your faithfulness and your loving-kindness,
for you have made your name and your word
supreme over all things.

³ At a time when I called to you, you gave me answer:
and put new strength within my soul.

⁴ All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord:
for they have heard the words of your mouth;

⁵ And they shall sing of the ways of the Lord:
that the glory of the Lord is great.

⁶ For though the Lord is exalted, he looks upon the lowly:
and he comprehends the proud from afar.

⁷ Though I walk in the midst of danger,
yet will you preserve my life:

you will stretch out your hand against the fury of my enemies, and your right hand shall save me.

⁸ The Lord will complete his purpose for me:

your loving-kindness, O Lord, endures for ever;
do not forsake the work of your own hands.

Questions:

- What can you give thanks to God with your whole heart for this week?
- In what ways has God's enduring love been present in your spiritual journey?
- The Psalmist is confident that God will complete God's purpose for them. Do you have that same confidence? What does God's purpose look like for you at this time?

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 15.1-11

¹ Now I should remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, ² through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain. ³ For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, ⁴ and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as to someone untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace towards me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹ Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

Questions:

- Paul describes how the resurrected Jesus appeared to Cephas (Peter), the 12, to more than 500 others and then to him. How might we experience the resurrected Jesus in our time and place?
- What is your personal testimony of Jesus' resurrection power and how might your testimony encourage others?
- Who's testimony of Jesus' resurrection power has encouraged you?

Gospel: Luke 5.1-11

¹ Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, ² he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' ⁵ Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' ⁶ When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. ⁷ So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!' ⁹ For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; ¹⁰ and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then

Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.' ¹¹ When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

Questions:

- Jesus, a carpenter, was telling trained fishermen how to ply their trade. How might Jesus give you insight into some areas of your life, work or giftedness that you might think do not need help because of your experience or qualifications?
- Have you ever felt Jesus stretch you into areas you might have been reluctant to go or follow?
- Similar to Isaiah's response, Peter responds with humility at the wonder of the great catch. How might we maintain a humble attitude in our response to God this week?

Prayer of the week

Father of all, who gave your only-begotten Son to take upon himself the form of a servant and to be obedient even to death on a cross: give us the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, that, sharing in his humility, we may come to be with him in his glory; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.