

Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time – C – 2019  
Isa.6.1-2,3-8///1Cor. 15.1-11///Luke 5.1-11

→recently I came across a little book written by a Jewish Rabbi entitled: *Jewish Humor: What the Best Jewish Jokes Say about the Jews.*

→In it he tells this story:

--a man once took some very fine material to a tailor and asked that tailor to make him a pair of pants.

→the man went back a week later but the pants weren't ready.

→two weeks went by and still the pants weren't ready....finally after six weeks the pants were finally finished

→the man tried them on and they fit perfectly...and as he was paying the tailor for them he said.... "you know it took God only six days to make the world and it took you six weeks to make just one pair of pants."

→to which the tailor responded... "yes...but look at the pair of pants...they're perfect!...now look at the world....it's a mess!"

→now that story fits nicely with today's gospel passage

--because it illustrates a point that we need to hear over and over again in our lives...and the point is this...perseverance is one of the great powers of world...human perseverance...is a very power tool to help us overcome the challenges that we face in life.

→the tailor hinted that perhaps God would have done a better job if he weren't in so much of a hurry...however I wonder if the tailor ever read his Bible closely...

→it tells us from the very beginning all that God made was good...and moreover...God put us humans in charge of everything...we were even in paradise...

→and as we all know too well...it was us humans that rebelled against God and destroyed the harmony and joy God had blessed us with....

→in essence...it was us...that created the mess we find ourselves in...and since then it has been up to us to persevere to make it all perfect again.....

→[and] in today's gospel passage we find a parallel and similar scenario happening....

...Peter and his friends had fished all night long without any success and had it not been for the words of Jesus...that's the way their effort for that day would have ended

→but Jesus persuades them to try one more time and when they do...it makes all the difference in the world for them...that's when their catch of fish exceeds their wildest dreams

PAUSE

-----in fact.....all three readings today are about perseverance  
...perseverance in serving the Lord...in living a Christian life...in following the Gospel...in living and relating to one another

→in the first reading...we hear about Isaiah the prophet ready to give up...he was fearful and reluctant to become God's mouthpiece for the people until his perseverance helps him to overcome his fear and reluctance

→in the second reading...Paul tells us of how the awareness of God in his life has caused him to persevere in his preaching and teaching...of how it has caused him to hand on to others what he himself has received

→and finally, in today's gospel we find the apostles of Jesus tired and frustrated...laboring all night and having nothing to show for it...ready to throw in the towel...until Jesus urges them to try again...one more time

PAUSE

→today's Gospel reading invites us to do two things

----first, it invites us to do what Peter and his friends did

----after throwing the nets into the water 20 or 30 times...Peter could have very well and easily given up...but he was asked to cast his net one final time and that spelled the difference between success and failure.....

→today's gospel also invites you and me to persevere in our efforts in life...to cast our nets again and again...especially when it would be easier to give up and surrender...or when it would be easier to walk away from that which challenges us

→or when it would be easier to just be left alone rather than being involved or committed to another person, or to a family, or to a community, a job, a church...a career

→all of us, I am sure have either felt this way, or do feel this way at some time or another...and it is at times like these...that we have to once again gather our nets and throw them into the water and continue to persevere

→**and secondly**, today's gospel invites us to involve Jesus Christ into our efforts in life...it was when Jesus entered the picture that Peter and his friends succeeded...and they not only succeeded...they exceeded beyond their wildest dreams

→and I believe the same can be true for you and me as well

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→you know as well as I do....that it is very easy to get frustrated these days...to get overwhelmed...to want to give up and surrender

→it is very easy to just say the “heck with everything and everyone”...and in today’s world and society that happens all too often and what is even worse is that we allow it to happen all too often

→spouses give up on spouses....parents give up on children and children give up on parents....we give up on relationships, on careers, on jobs and we give up on God and we give up on the Church

→and yet today...we are being urged to once again throw our nets into the water and to persevere in what we believe in...in what we are committed too, in what we hope for and desire...not because we are being asked to prove anything...but because it is the RIGHT thing to do and

--it is what God and Christ is calling us to do

---and because the results will very often...exceed our wildest dreams

PAUSE

→that is what happened to Peter that night in his empty fishing boat....that is what happened to Paul and Isaiah and with so many others throughout history....and that is what happened to the man and his perfect pair of pants....

and with perseverance, with our human spirit...and with prayer and a deep abiding faith in our lives...might not the same happen to you and me.