

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster
Sunday, February 6th, 2022, Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Isaiah 6:1-13, Psalm 138, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Luke 5:1-11

This Gospel passage is at the beginning of Jesus' ministry with the disciples fishing and Jesus saying to them that he will make them fish for people.

It is bad enough that we are compared to sheep in other passages and this one that we would fish for others or be like fish ourselves.
But what does Jesus mean by this?

The evangelicals would explain this as converting people to Christ and having them join the church.

There is a similar event mentioned at the end of John's Gospel. John 21:1-19
Jesus appears to the disciples on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius, and like the first passage only catch the second time out.
This time, instead of fishing for people, Jesus has a private conversation with Peter when he asks him if he loves him, three times. And when Peter says yes, Jesus tells him to feed his sheep or tend his lambs those three times.

The obvious answer as to why Jesus asks three times is to forgive Peter for denying him three times, but there is more to it.

The act of feeding is multi faceted, and not just about food. I know we like to have food at our gatherings together.....

Yes, it is about food but more than food.
The three times mean different types of feeding.
-Physical feeding in all this means,
-Emotional and Intellectual feeding
-And Spiritual feeding.

So, I believe what Jesus is actually asking of us is caring for each other as total beings, not just one aspect of who we are.

But we may not feel adequate or up to this request from God.
Isaiah felt the same when he said, *Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips.*

Isaiah is forgiven then says: *"Here am I; send me!"*

In other words, God would not ask if God did not think it possible.

I am reminded of a time at the Diocese of Ontario church camp and the Executive Director thinking out loud about the new waterfront director. That she right at that moment could not do what the previous waterfront director could do but would grow into the position and do an excellent job.

Is that the case for us as well, that we need to start and who knows where the Spirit of God will lead us?

Amen