

Isaiah 9: 1-4  
Psalm 27: 1, 5-13  
1 Corinthians 1: 10-18  
Matthew 4: 12-23

*JESUS CALLS US*

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“Jesus walked along the shore of Lake Galilee...”

Wait a minute - how'd we get to Galilee?

Jesus was just baptized by John two weeks ago,  
and coming up out of that southern end of the Jordan River  
he is approached by Andrew and his buddy  
and they spend the afternoon and evening together,  
or at least as St. John told it last week.

And somehow we missed the fact that Jesus was sent by God's Spirit  
into the desert near the Dead Sea at the southern end of the Jordan  
for those temptations by Satan,  
although we won't hear that part of the story,  
until the first Sunday in Lent -  
liturgical anachronism.

So, how do we get to the Sea of Galilee at the top of the Jordan River,  
and even further, at the northern end of the Sea at Capernaum?

In the verses missing from today's Gospel,  
Matthew suggests that Jesus went back home to Nazareth  
after all this, then

“Jesus did not stay there, but when he heard that John the Baptist had been arrested by King Herod and put in prison, he went to live in Capernaum, a town by Lake Galilee, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali [sort of like counties in the state of Israel.]

*Matthew 4: 12-13*

Matthew's take on it is that

“This was done to make come true what the prophet Isaiah had said: ‘Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, on the road to the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee, land of the Gentiles! The people who live in darkness will see a great light. On those who live in the dark land of death, the light will shine.’ ”

*Matthew 4: 15-16, quoting Isaiah 9:1-2*

Which we heard in today's first reading.

But why?

Because Jesus needed to call a couple of fisher-folk.

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When Jesus was baptized, Andrew and his buddy went with Jesus  
to where he was staying and spent time with him.  
Maybe they were returning the favor.  
Maybe Jesus needed to hide from Herod.  
Remember the first thing that Andrew did the next day -  
he went to find his brother Simon Peter and tell him about Jesus.  
Presumably, Simon was still at home, on the Sea of Galilee fishing  
when Andrew came to him.

A carpenter's child, surrounded by sheep and shepherds,  
now seeks out fisher-folk.  
All we need is truck drivers, and diner wait-staff.  
Maybe Jesus is calling us, too.  
Prostitutes and tax-collectors.  
Did Jesus know anything about these people?  
Sometimes you just know.

One of the reasons I liked working with youth in the Diocese  
is that sometimes you see things.  
A side-bar - I am chaplain to our Diocesan Youth Mission trip in June.  
Years ago we were at the Happening weekend for Sr. High Youth -  
a Cursillo event, if you know what that is.  
And on Sunday morning, I ran into one of our youth staff in the hallway  
and asked, "Jen, have you ever considered the priesthood?"  
"Yeah, you're about the fourth person to ask me."  
And she's now a Bishop somewhere in the mid-west!

What did we see in her at even that young age?  
Who knows.

Who knows what Jesus saw in Andrew and whoever his buddy was.  
What Jesus saw in an initial meeting of Peter, then James and John.  
Who knows what Jesus sees in you?

They weren't saints.  
Neither are we.  
Andrew was young and impetuous.  
Simon was called Petros / Rocky for a reason -  
Jesus saw right off from the bat that Simon was rock-headed.  
And James and John? They were called the Sons of Thunder.  
You can imagine what that means.  
And they were also position seekers - ladder climbers -  
wanting to sit at the right hand of Jesus in the Kingdom.

Or was that their mother who pushed Jesus for that one?

Depends on which Gospel you read.

You can't deny your parentage -

Sons of Thunder -

what *was* Zebedee like at home

or at work long hours in the boat with the boys?

And here is a soccer Mom Salome

with her two first-string athletes.

So no one is perfect.

But that doesn't matter to Jesus.

He calls you anyway.

And don't worry - he'll come to find you.

If he hasn't already.

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## CHILDREN'S SERMON

### Fishing with Vinegar & Honey

*a glass of honey and a glass of vinegar.*

*drink a little of the vinegar - wait for their reaction*

Oh, you'd like the honey better, eh?

*pour a little honey in your mouth.*

Mmm. Much better.

What would you use to go fishing?

You wouldn't use vinegar, I'm sure.

Although vinegar has many good purposes, like cleaning things, it's not good for fishing.

Neither is honey, right?

Even though it's nice and sweet, I doubt fish would be interested.

Now, bears - that's a different story.

They *love* honey, like Winnie the Pooh!

Maybe you've heard the old saying,

“It's easy to catch a bear with honey than it is with vinegar.”

Do you know what that means?

Being nice to someone who's big and growly and scary

is better and safer than being mean and nasty to them in return.

You just might make a friend.

Let's pray:

Jesus, we want to be like the disciples and invite everyone to believe in you like we do. Help us to find sweet and pleasant and nice ways to invite them to come with us to Church and to know you.  
AMEN.