

SCOUT SUNDAY

Isaiah 6: 1-8(9-13)  
Psalm 138  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11  
Luke 5:1-11

*GOING FISHING*

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You know, fishing is an introvert's heaven.  
It's a good way to spend a day out in nature  
    where there's no coverage  
    and as I said last week, where there's no iPod music,  
        or whatever there is these days,  
    listening only to the stream rolling by,  
        and hopefully a trout or two jumping into your lap.  
There's nothing better than being in a canoe, or wading into a stream,  
    far from anyone else, and communing only with God's creation.

Introvert heaven.

And it's still one of the major Scout merit badges.  
I occasionally will sit in camp with my book,  
    watch two guys go off together ('cause the Buddy System works)  
and know that they'll be standing on the shore yards away from each other.  
"Quiet! You'll scare the fish!"  
And I'm glad they've left camp, so I can sit quietly and read my book.  
Just need to know where you're going and who you're with.

People don't believe it when I tell them I rate high on the Introvert scale.  
The Rectory has no door-bell, except Shelby barking,  
    and though the den looks out the second floor onto the Park,  
        it's a "fur piece" away,  
        and when I finish my study across from the attic library  
    my study will be on the third floor in the back of the house.

It was the same in our house on the hill;  
It was the same in the Rectory in Hamlin;  
It was the same in seminary.  
I had a first floor room looking out onto the beautiful Victorian grounds  
    and I always had my door open.  
People knew I was there (except when I was on the roof of the tower) -  
friends could often come in to visit or borrow a book  
    from the Erb Lending Library,  
        because going to the St. Mark's Library -  
            the largest theological library in the country -  
                that was too extroverted for me!

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So I worked in my room, door open, first floor window  
where people could pass and wave.  
But I was comfortable in my cocoon with nice music on WQXR  
and a fire going in the fireplace.  
I had the only working fireplace on the Close.

Even the few sports that I enjoy is a matter of introversion:  
bicycling, skiing, camping, back-packing, canoeing, even golfing...  
I can be with you, but it really is an introverted quiet time alone.  
I'm still working on the fishing thing with a beautiful Orvis rod and reel.  
A friend has been trying for years to teach me fly-fishing.  
But you just need to get out and practice:  
10-2; 10-2; 10-2; cast.  
My philosophy of fishing - it's a great way of spending time outdoors.  
If you catch a fish, so much the better.

The disciples, though, had to look at things differently.  
I really think they were introverts.  
And all of a sudden Jesus says, Nope.  
Get out of the boat and go throughout the world and preach.  
Time for you to become Extroverts - Get out there!  
Now, fishing was their vocation - at least the first four Disciples.  
Two brothers, Peter and Andrew  
and their cousins, again two brothers - James and John.  
It was their family business,  
they probably never left their community of Capernaum  
on the north side of Lake Gennesaret - *ie* the Sea of Galilee.  
The Sea of Galilee is somewhat like Wallenpaupack, though wider.  
Communing with God in Nature was, well, natural for these four guys.  
I'd be surprised if they didn't hike the hills which led down to the Lake.  
It's not a matter of them not appreciating God and God in nature,  
but I believe as typical guys, and fishermen, they didn't think much  
about encountering God in the middle of a lake.  
They were more concerned about the work at hand,  
casting of nets, hauling in the load, hopefully a heavy load, of fish.  
But God in the lake?

They went to synagogue every Shabbat and knew the Psalms  
talking about the God who created the hills and the depth of the sea.  
But to actually have that same God,  
or a human who would end up showing himself to be God,  
he climbs into your boat,  
you listen to him preach to the people gathered on the shore,  
and you are mesmerized by what you hear.  
And now this carpenter dude tells you to cast out further.

He doesn't know Jack about fishing!  
He was a carpenter, didn't know anything about fishing.  
We've been doing this all night and nothing,  
    we've been working all our lives, like our fathers and grandfathers.  
We know what we're doing.  
And Jesus thinks, "And yes, I know what I'm doing. Just do it."  
And Simon Peter senses the waves - the electric waves of Jesus' thought.  
And they push off again - this time to great success -  
    to such great success that they almost sink the boats  
        with the weight of the catch of fish.  
And the guys - Peter, James, John, and we guess young Andrew, too -  
    leave the boats and the fish behind for Zebedee to take care of -  
        and follow Jesus.  
"We will cast nets to bring people to know you, to know God  
    to follow and to be healed of their sin."  
But here's the rub, for the introverts among us.  
I need to step out of my little boat and face the crowd on the shore.  
But there's more of a lesson here.  
You can't just rush out into the crowd with a sharp hook  
    and expect to bring in the masses to believe and follow the Way.  
As much as I want to stand in the stream and cast my fly for one fish,  
    I see from Christ's message, that I can use a net instead of a hook.  
Gently haul them in rather than catch them.

Now for me as a priest, there's a challenge - a real challenge.  
I'd rather hook one person at a time,  
    in the midst of their vulnerability of sorts maybe,  
        and convince them with a beautifully tied fake fly  
    a fly with no substance, a cheap advertisement of nourishment,  
        and reel them in with, as it were, false pretenses.  
Instead Jesus shows the first Disciples that they can and should  
    preach the Good News of Salvation and Healing to the masses  
        to step out of their comfort zone and go into the world.  
An Introvert's worst nightmare!  
To stand in the public view and preach,  
    casting the net of the Gospel into the dark waters of a turbulent sea.

The turbulent seas of society -  
    a society who is eager to hear Good News.  
A society right around us who hunger and thirst to hear Good News.  
A people who are needing to be caught into the net of God's love -  
    my love, your love.  
Maybe, like Jesus suggests to Simon Peter,  
    you need to push out a little further into the deeper water,  
        and with your partners in the faith  
            cast your nets.

What I've learned is that I can't pull in a load of fish the first time.  
I need to work at it.  
I need to practice that 10 and 2, 10 and 2.  
Until I learn the magic of catching that rainbow.  
But maybe I need to give up the rod and reel, and the solitude  
and pick up a net and cast it into the dark waters of our world.  
And the mystery is that those we catch will feed the hunger of others.  
Give a man a fish, and he eats for a day.  
Teach a man to fish, and he will fulfill the needs of the world.  
Now there's a catch!

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## CHILDREN'S SERMON

*fishing rod & reel, and a large fishing net*

How many of you have been fishing,  
on your scout trips, or with your family?  
Caught much?  
Me neither.

But what I learned today is that I need to let Jesus in my boat.  
John and Jim and Pete and Andy, they let Jesus come into their boat  
and listen to his idea.  
Now he was a carpenter, and they were professional fishermen.  
But they listened to him, and Wow!  
The pull of fish they lifted into the boat -  
it was so much that their boats - two boats began to sink -  
the fish were so heavy!  
When we let Jesus come into our boat,  
and we listen to what he tells us to do,  
Wow! We'll be blessed SO MUCH!