

# Praying the Scripture - a few simple steps at home

## Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022

Start with stillness and quietening down; then gently read the passage, noticing any feelings and connections to your own experience.

1. Read the passage again and spend understand. *The notes in your Bible may be of help at this point.*
2. Read the passage a third time - wondering how you yourself might pray the text over the next few days.
3. Over the next week, set aside times to come back more than once to the passage. You could read it all or part of it again, slowly. Perhaps there is a special word for you in this passage of Scripture? Keep this word or phrase in your thoughts and gently repeat it, bringing it to mind and allowing God to speak to you in your heart.
4. Finally, come back to the text to conclude: What is God in this scripture asking of you this week? What is the one challenge, one little change you are asked to make or the thing you have been asked to do? Then say a prayer of thanksgiving for the good news in the passage. End in quiet prayer.



### **THIS SUNDAY'S GOSPEL – Luke 5:1-11** *Jesus Calls his first disciples*

*Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 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. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.' Simon answered, 'Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.' When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. 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. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!' For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; 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.' When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.*



### **A Short Thought**

*This text offers rich possibilities for reflecting on how God calls ordinary people to discipleship and mission. After all, there is nothing the slightest bit extraordinary about Simon Peter and his fishing partners. They are simple fishermen, and they are simply doing what they did every day. They are minding their own business, cleaning their nets after a long, particularly discouraging night of work, when Jesus comes along, enters into their utterly normal, mundane lives and changes everything. Jesus calls Simon and his partners as they are. Simon is acutely aware of his unworthiness, but Jesus is not put off by this in the slightest. Jesus does not ask Simon to get his act together, his resume prepared, and then come back for an interview. Rather, Jesus encounters him as he is, tells him not to be afraid, and calls him to a new mission of catching people.*

*Throughout Scripture we see that human sin, failure, and inadequacy are no obstacles to God's call. God calls imperfect people to do God's work, people who are aware of their unworthiness and are often doubting and resistant to God's call (see, for example, Exodus 3:10-12; Isaiah 6:1-6; Jeremiah 1:6-8.) God doesn't wait for them to shape up. God calls them as they are and then works on shaping them into faithful servants.*

*How often do we resist Jesus' claim on our lives because what he is calling us to do seems too crazy, too impractical? How often do we avoid putting out into the deep waters of following and bearing witness to Jesus because we are convinced that we will not see any results? What might it mean for us to go deep-sea fishing with Jesus — to trust and follow him outside our comfort zones, to let go of our certainties, to have our lives radically reoriented? We all are called daily to reorient our priorities to align with God's priorities, to use the gifts God has given us in service to others, to share the good news of Christ in word and deed. Jesus' mission does not wait until we think we are ready. The need for the gospel in this broken world is far too urgent. We are called right now — even despite our frailty, failures, and doubts, even in the midst of our ordinary, busy, complicated lives. Jesus' word to Simon Peter is also a word to us: "Do not be afraid."*

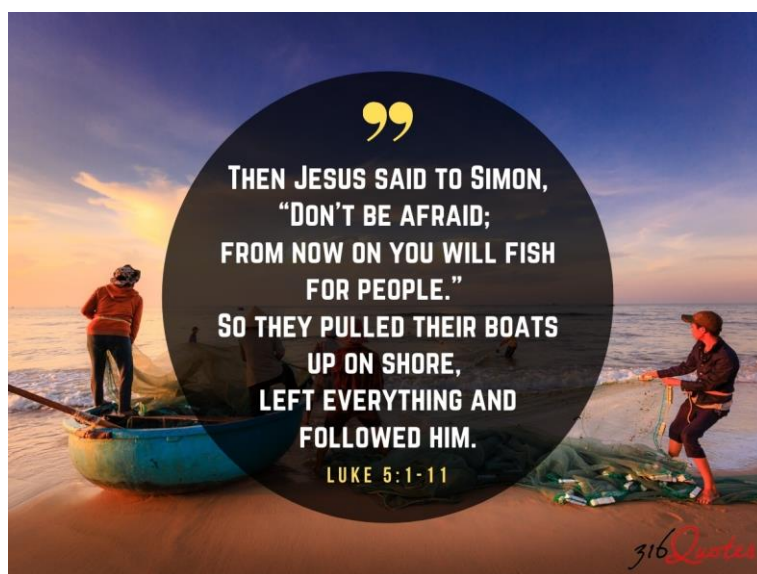
*This week trust that this is Jesus' mission, and dare to trust that he will keep working with us and through us.*

## SOME POINTERS FOR PRAYER

- Imagine the people pressing on Jesus to hear God’s message. The boat used is Simon’s who feels disheartened after fishing all night with no catch. Encouraged to try again, it results in a tremendous catch. Simon is overwhelmed and leaves everything to follow Jesus. There can be times in my life when I feel like a failure or want to give up. Can I trust in Jesus and let go of what blocks me from deepening my relationship with him?
- “Put out into the deep water”. When have you found that blessings, or progress, came when you had the courage to venture into unfamiliar waters, where you felt uneasy and insecure? What, or who, helped to give you that courage?
- We follow Jesus as he persuades the reluctant Simon to have another go at a catch, despite having fished in vain all night. We watch closely this miraculous moment and the reaction of those involved. As a participator, what was my reaction? The fishermen were hooked and left their way of life to follow Jesus. In what way are we called today to follow the Lord?
- Simon had a profound sense of a power at work that he could not understand. When have you had a sense of the divine breaking into everyday experience?
- The real message here is in the last few words: ‘they left everything and followed him’. They left behind them their great catch because they had been captivated instead by the person of Jesus. We too are to ‘seek first the kingdom of God’ – we are to live in God’s world and judge the world’s affairs from that vantage point. Recall the story of key decisions or turning points in your life. Who was Jesus for you in those situations?

## Prayer

Most holy God, the earth is filled with your glory and in your presence, angels stand in awe. Enlarge our vision, that we may recognise your power at work in your Son and join the apostles and prophets as heralds of your saving word. We ask this, as always, through Jesus Christ your son, Amen



### Prayer in these uncertain times

*We pray for all those in our country and throughout the world suffering from the Corona Virus. May its victims and their families be strengthened by the support of our community of faith and restored soon to full health. We also pray for our leaders and medical personnel who deal with the virus. May we keep calm and may we join together in solidarity with care and compassion to tackle this emergency. This we ask in confidence through Christ Our Lord. Amen*