



February 7, 2010
Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Jesus said to Simon Peter “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” Luke 5:10

Dear Friends;

Many of us live our lives out of a “weakness prevention” model. Whether it is our work, family or spiritual life, we think that we need to focus on what is lacking and try to improve it. We have been told by parents, teachers, bosses and the Church that in order to be strong, successful or to serve God we must “fix” our weaknesses.

In today’s readings from Isaiah and the Gospel of Luke we see two people caught up in weakness fixing. Isaiah says, “Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips...” Peter in the Lukan Gospel cries out to Jesus something similar, “Depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man.” Both men are paralyzed with the fear of their own inadequacies.

In both cases God doesn’t leave them with their self recriminations. God does not deny the weakness but does not dwell on it either. Rather God gets them to focus on what God is calling them to be: a messenger to the people, a fisher of people. God gets them to focus not on what they are lacking but on what they might become.

For 30 years Gallup Organization has done research into human potential, including interviews with over 2 million people. What they found is people will be most successful in what they do in life when they focus on their greatest natural abilities rather than their weaknesses. Jesus is going to take Peter’s skills as a fisherman and use them to hook people on the Gospel.

The problem is so many of us do not even recognize how much God has gifted us. We need to discover what are gifts, strengths and talents are. Then we can hear the call of God, “Whom should I send?” Then we will be empowered to respond, “Here I am, send me!”

One of the things that we at St. Anne Church are committed to is helping you discover your strengths. We have offered the opportunity to discover your gifts through the “Clifton Strength Finder” found in the book “Living your Strengths.” We have offered a retreat based on growing those strengths and have offered opportunities to meet with a certified strengths coach.

This coming Lent we will again be offering these opportunities. Lent is a perfect time to take time, to retreat and discern our gifts and God’s call. “Do not be afraid,” we have a good and loving God who empowers us for our mission in the world.

Peace,

Fr. Ron