

In today's gospel we heard about an encounter Peter had with Jesus. Peter has had one of those days when nothing seems to be going right. He has worked and toiled all night and has nothing to show for it. Maybe that is something we all can relate one way or another. We worked hard and try our best but things does not go the way we want. We can be very frustrated or just give up or start something else. Peter is tired, he is drained, and he has given up. No fish for dinner.

And then it happens - the teacher Jesus – who, by the way, knows little about the art of fishing, invites Peter to put out into the deep once again and to let down the nets.

Simon Peter quickly says, "*Master, we have worked all night long but have caught – nothing – zero.*" But maybe not wanting to be unkind to the man who had previously healed his mother-in-law, Simon hears himself saying, "*Yet if you say so*", I will let down the nets.

And the Master has said so... so we see Peter dragging himself back into the deep waters, letting down the nets again expecting nothing. But what he found out was that the fish are so many that the nets begin to break and the boats are so filled with fish that they begin to sink.

This was a God's encounter with Peter. What Peter thought impossible was made possible with God.

This is to say that our God's presence changes lives, transforms lives, and gives us hope, gives us energy to say to this broken, hurting world, you do not have the last word. God does!

That is the Good News that we are called to share! God is among us. God's Spirit is stirring us as people of faith. God's presence transforms our lives. God is there with us, walking beside us, lifting us up on wings like an eagle.

God is there, giving us strength to say to this world: Yes, there is hope. Yes, there is grace. Yes, there is love. Yes, there is new life! Because that is the God that we have experienced in our lives.

That is God who formed us in the womb. That is the God who has watched over us from our birth. That is the God that knows our comings and our goings. This mighty, majestic, powerful, mystery God who took the form of a baby and came to restore us and renew us as people of God. Just like Isaiah, when we come into the presence of God, we are filled with amazement and wonder.

Just like Isaiah, we realize that we have tried to limit God, to put God in a box, to tame God. Just like Isaiah, when we stand before the presence of God, we realize how impossible that task really was. We can't limit God. Our God is too powerful. We can't make God safe. Our God is too mysterious. We can't tame God. Our God is Holy! Our God is an awesome God who reigns from heaven above with wisdom, power and love. Our God is not a God who can be contained in a box. Our God is holy, majestic, and mysterious. Our God inspires God's people. Our God cares passionately for God's people. Our God provides hope for God's people.

And that is the God that Isaiah encounters in our Scripture today. That is the God that Isaiah responds to when he says Here I Am. That is the God that renews Isaiah when his ministry becomes too much to bear. That is the God that Isaiah remembers when he says this world does not have the last word. When Prophet Isaiah heard the God calling, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Prophet Isaiah responded to that God saying: "Here am I; send me!"

Sometimes we forget why we are here, in this place of God? We are here for spiritual nourishment: fuel for our tanks, food for our journey, supplies for our task, recovery for our soul, hope for hearts, and direction for our days.

We are here to invite God to inhabit us - to fill us - to restore us - to guide us so that we can do what God wants us to do? So that we can be what God wants us to be? What God has made us to be?

The message of God for us today in the prophet Isaiah is precisely this.

It is a call to a people who were living in exile:
Call to wait upon God, to listen to God - as well as to speak to God,
so God can raise them up,
so God can restore them to health,

so God can unfold his plan for them,
a plan in which their freedom is to be restored, their nation rebuilt,
and their cup of suffering replaced with the cup of eternal joy.

God has a plan and a purpose for us. For everyone of us.
Sometimes we don't understand God's plan for us like little Samuel. God
calls him but he thought its somebody else.

Sometimes we resist God's plan for us like Jona. God asked Jona to go
Nineve, a city full of people who were living in sin. Joana did not want to
do that. We know the story. He was in a ship going different direction and
then this huge storm came and the ship was about to sink and Joana knew
exactly what was happening. He asked to thrown to the sea. And this big
fish came took Joana to the city of Ninewe.

Sometimes we try not only to resist but fight against God's plan to defeat
God's plan like Paul. Paul was arresting people who followed Jesus and was
working hard to aggressively persecute them when he saw the vision of
Jesus on his way to Tharsus. That changed his whole life.

On that day Paul found his purpose of life, God's plan for him.
From that day onwards, everywhere Paul went
he shared the good news of Jesus Christ,
- he shared it with his jailers while in prison,
- with the Roman governor while on trial for his life,
- with crowds at the market place, synagogues & in numerous cities, homes

Paul was called to be what we call these days "a traveling evangelist".
But while Paul's calling was a special one the essence of his calling is not
special at all, each of us is called to be an evangelist.

We, like Paul, are called to share the good news of Jesus Christ -
the Savior who has affected our lives,
the God who has made us whole.

We can talk about it
We can show that in our actions
How we interact with friends, neighbors those whom we do not know

Yes, God has a plan and a purpose for us. For everyone of us.

We want our lives to be productive: productive to us, to our families, to community, our church. God can use us individually and collectively.

As Christians we believe that each and everyone of us is created in God's own image with a God's purpose for each and everyone.

Our goal is to find God's purpose in our lives. That could be a life time goal. That will be our spiritual journey.

Once we have found our purpose in God, all we have to do is share that joy that happiness with our friends, our neighbors: through our words, our actions.

God is calling: sometimes it could be a collective call for a community, for a church community.

Sometimes it could be an individual call, a call to you or me.

As Prophet Isaiah heard, we might hear God calling: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

Let's pray that when we hear that God's call we have the faith and strength to say: "Here am I; send me!"