

**Fourth Sunday after Pentecost,
17 June 2018**

“Master, the whole night through we have toiled and have taken nothing; but at thy word I will lower the net.” Lk. 5: 5

Fr. Gabriel of St. Magdalene in his book of meditations, *Divine Intimacy*, tells us: “Two ideas dominate the liturgy of today’s Mass: great confidence in God and an acute awareness of our human misery and insufficiency. These two ideas are closely connected, for it is the consciousness of our nothingness which leads us to put all our confidence in God, and the greater the confidence becomes in us, the more convinced we are of our nothingness. The Mass begins with a cry of unshakable hope: *‘The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?’* (Introit) The Lord is with me in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, the Lord comes to me in Holy Communion. What can separate me from Him? What can make me fear? Yet I know my weakness; I have ever before my eyes the remembrance of my failures and infidelities. How great, then, is my need to humbly repeat the beautiful prayer of the of the Gradual: ‘Save us, O Lord, and pardon our sins.. Help us, O God, our Saviour, for the glory of Your Name.’ Yes, in spite of the continual help of divine grace, in spite of so many confessions and communions, I have to acknowledge new failures every day; daily, I must begin anew.

Confidence in Jesus’ Redemption

“The struggle is arduous and painful, but in today’s Epistle (Rom. 8: 18-23), St. Paul reminds us that *‘the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed in us.’* Rom. 8:18 This thought is one of consolation, hope and confidence; it does not, however, prevent us from longing for freedom and complete redemption. This is what the Apostle experienced when he said: *‘We also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body in Christ Jesus.’* Rom. 8:23 The more we suffer because of our wretchedness, the more we should run to Jesus, with full confidence in the power of His Redemption.

“Without Me, you can do nothing.” Jn. 15:5.

“Today’s Gospel (Lk. 5:1-11) is a practical demonstration of the words of Jesus: *‘Without Me, you can do nothing’* (Jn. 15:5). Simon and his companions had been fishing all night and had caught nothing; that is all they had been able to do by themselves. If we have had some little experience in the spiritual life, we will recognize that is often our situation too. How many efforts we have made to rid ourselves of this or that attachment, to forget injuries, to adapt ourselves to our neighbour’s way of doing things, to subject our will to another’s! And yet, after all these attempts, we find our hands empty, like Peter’s nets. Let us not be discouraged; if we can humbly acknowledge our failure itself will turn into victory. So it happened to Peter after he admitted publicly that he had *‘taken nothing’* (Lk. 5:5). St. Therese of the Child Jesus comments: *‘Had the Apostle caught some small fish, perhaps our divine Master would not have worked a miracle; but he had caught nothing, and so through the power and goodness of God his nets were soon filled with great fishes. Such is Our Lord’s way. He gives as God, with divine generosity, but He insists on humility of heart.’*” (*Letters of St. Therese*) Fr. Gabriel, *Divine Intimacy*, p. 648-9

“The kingdom of heaven”

In a spiritual interpretation of today’s gospel, Dom Prosper Guéranger in his book, *The Liturgical Year Vol. 11* comments on the allegorical interpretation of the fathers who relate the gospel story to the Church: “...As she now is, the Church is the multitude, without distinction between good and bad; but afterwards—that is, after the resurrection—the good alone will compose the Church, and their number will be forever fixed. *‘The kingdom of heaven,’* says Our Lord, *‘is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kind of fishes; which, when it was filled, they drew out; they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad cast forth.’* Mt. 13: 47-8 To speak with St. Augustine, the fishers of men have cast forth their nets; they have taken the multitude of Christians which we see in wonderment; they have filled the two ships with them, the two peoples, Jew and Gentile. But what is this we are told? The multitude weighs down the ships, even to the risk of sinking them; it is what we witness now: the pressing and mingled crowd of the baptized is a burden to the Church. Many Christians there are who live badly; they are a trouble to, and keep back, the

good. Worse than these, there are those who tear the nets by their schisms or their heresies; they are impatient of the yoke of unity, and will not come to the banquet of Christ; they are pleased with themselves. Under pretext that they cannot live with the bad, they break the net which kept them in the apostolic track, and they die far off the shore. ...Let us not imitate their folly. If grace has made us holy, let us be patient with the bad while living in this world's waters. Let the sight of them drive us neither to live as they do, nor to leave the Church. The shore is not far off, where those on the right, or the good, will alone be permitted to land, and from which the wicked will be repulsed and cast into the abyss." Gueranger, p. 128-29

Faith in Jesus Christ

Fr. Gabriel reminds us of the faith that we need to have in Jesus Christ. "In spite of our good will to advance in virtue, Our Lord will not permit us to have any success until He sees that we are thoroughly convinced of our own weakness and inability; to give us this conviction, He lets us, as He let Peter, work all night without catching anything (cf. Lk. 5:5). But afterwards, as He sees our growing awareness of our poverty and our willingness to admit it openly, He will come to our aid. We must, then, have great faith in Him, never allowing ourselves to give up through lack of success. Every day, relying 'on His word,' we must begin anew. If we have learned not to trust in our own strength, we must also learn to have complete confidence in the divine aid. If we have caught nothing until now, perhaps it is our lack of unshakable confidence that is the cause, and this deficiency, besides being displeasing to Jesus, paralyzed our spiritual life. Then let us repeat with Peter in a similar cry of confidence: "...Lord, at Thy word, I will let down the net" (Lk. 5: 5). And let us repeat it every day, every moment without growing weary." Fr. Gabriel, p. 649-50

"At thy word I will let down my net." Lk. 5:6

Cornelius a Lapide in Commentary of St. Luke's Gospel, tells us: "Because Peter had said, 'At Thy word I will let down my net...' Behold, this is the fruit of obedience. Jesus did this: 1. In order that by providing them with food, He might prepare them for their vocation and discipleship. As if to say: I have decided to call you away from fishing in order to be my disciples; make no excuse, saying that you must work for your livelihood as fishermen. Behold, I supply you

with this miraculous draft of fishes, so that you might believe in Me, that even without fishing I shall provide you with your food and all things necessary for life, more easily and more abundantly than you can provide them yourselves by your toil and labor. 2. To teach from this plentiful catch of fish, that they were soon to become successful fishers of men, when they were called by Christ to do so." A Lapide, p. 352 So, too, Jesus calls us to do His will in our vocation in life, and, as St. Thomas Aquinas teaches, He will always give us the necessary graces for the vocation to which we have been called.

From "*In Sinu Jesu*"

"My Heart has a particular love for you, a love that My Father destined for you alone and for no other from all eternity. How it grieves My Heart when the unique love I offer a soul is spurned, or ignored, or regarded with indifference! I tell you this so that you may make reparation to My Heart by accepting the love I have for you and by living in My friendship. Receive My gifts, My kindnesses, My attention, My mercies for the sake of those who refuse what I so desire to give them. Do this especially for My priests, your brothers. P.26-7

. "Never miss an opportunity to greet Me, to adore Me, to remain with Me, even if only for a moment, in the Sacrament of My love. In eternity you will see the inestimable value of every moment spent in My Eucharistic presence. I renew for you the gift of the protection and intercession of Saint Peter Julian. I renew for you the companionship and intercession of Abbot Marmion, of Father Vandeur, and of those saints whom, at different moments in your journey, I have sent into your life to minister to you. Above all, I renew for you the words I uttered for Saint John from the Cross: 'Behold your Mother.' Live in her presence. Honour her at every occasion and in every way possible. Every time you show love and devotion to My most holy Mother, you honour the words I spoke from the Cross, and you put them into practice. 'Behold your Mother.' She desires nothing more than to look after you, just as if you were her only son. Her attention for you is not divided, nor is it in any way impaired by the attention she gives to the vast multitude of her children through the ages. Trust in her care for you. Pray her Rosary. Honour her as you have been doing. The presence of My Mother in the life of a priest is the supreme grace, because she is, by the will

of My Father and by the operation of the Holy Spirit, the Mediatrix of all graces. How it pleases Me when you have recourse to her by this title! When you glorify My Mother, you glorify Me. And when you glorify Me, you glorify My Father and the Holy Spirit, the Advocate sent in My Name to complete My work and to bring to perfection the kingdom which I established by My death and resurrection.” P.32-