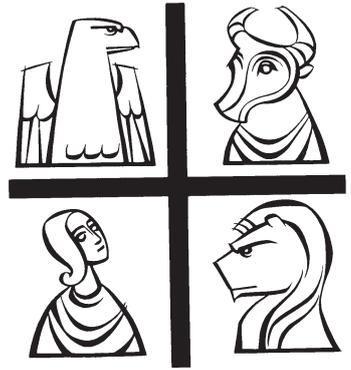


Reading Luke in Lent



Gospel of Luke 5:1-26

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

¹ On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God,
he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret,
² and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.
³ Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat.
⁴ And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.'
⁵ And Simon answered, 'Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.'
⁶ And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking.
⁷ They signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.
⁸ But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.'
⁹ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken,
¹⁰ and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.'
¹¹ And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

¹² While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.'
¹³ And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, 'I will; be clean.' And immediately the leprosy left him.
¹⁴ And he charged him to tell no one, but 'go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them.'
¹⁵ But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities.
¹⁶ But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

¹⁷ On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.

18 And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed,
and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus,
19 but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof
and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus.
20 And when he saw their faith, he said,
'Man, your sins are forgiven you.'
21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying,
'Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?'
22 When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them,
'Why do you question in your hearts?
23 Which is easier, to say, "Your sins are forgiven you," or to say, "Rise and walk"?
24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins'
—he said to the man who was paralyzed—
'I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.'
25 And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on
and went home, glorifying God.
26 And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying,
'We have seen extraordinary things today.'

Reflection

Luke's storytelling can have vivid touches: the boat pushed away from the shore, the removal of a roof. As vivid is Jesus' calling of Simon Peter: the invitation to put out into the deep, the catch of fish. Peter follows because of what he has seen and heard; he is the first to recognise him as 'Lord'.

In this section there is the first of series of encounters with Pharisees where they challenge Jesus. In his responses Jesus slowly reveals who he is — here he is the Son of Man who has authority to forgive sins.

- Both Peter and the friends of the paralytic show great trust not knowing what the outcome will be.

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 through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.
Amen.