

June 26th: Saint Josemaria

Gospel for June 26th, feast of Saint Josemaria, and commentary.

Gospel (*Lk 5:1-11*)

While the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. And he saw two boats by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 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.

And when he had ceased speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned 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. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men."

And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

Commentary

Two dimensions converged at the Lake of Gennesaret. One was divine, since God was there. And the other, a few fishermen. God had an eternal plan. The others, their ordinary daily plan. And then, God decided that the daily plan was to become an eternal one. It was the first chapter in a love story.

Our Lord got into their boat. At first, they thought they were doing Him a favor. Little by little, they began to realize that He was taking control of the boat. Later, they witnessed something extraordinary: a miraculous catch of fish. In the end, when they returned to shore, they

realized that nothing would ever be the same again. It was as though they had opened their eyes for the first time. And so they left everything. In order to gain everything. To gain Him.

What happened on the Lake has been repeated countless times. Many, unfortunately, failed to realize it. And thus their life continued in one dimension.

But fortunately, many others did notice. God had already gone to Nazareth to tell Mary of his eternal plan. Several centuries later, he went to Milan to stir Augustine's heart. And then to Siena, to guide Catherine. And to Pamplona, to wake Ignatius from his torpor. And to Uganda, to call Carlos. They all said yes, and, like those first fishermen, they changed the course of history.

“It seems as though you have been chosen, one by one, he said. And so it is!” (*Furrow* 220).

After twenty centuries, our Lord also decided to go to Logroño, to wake up a boy born in Barbastro named Josemaría, making use of some footprints in the snow. The procedure was the same as always. He got into the boat of that person's life and, if the answer was yes, gradually became master and Lord. The boy realized that nothing would ever be the same again: that love means risking your whole life on a single card. And so, leaving everything, he followed Him.

God wanted ordinary daily life to become part of an eternal plan. The ordinary life of men and women was to be the place of their encounter with their Creator.

Many people had forgotten this marvelous truth. So the mission of

this new fisher of men was to shout to the world, with words but above all with his life, that every moment can take on the value of eternity.

That Christ has walked on this earth and sanctified it. That Jesus worked as a craftsman for many years, and that even the Risen Jesus cooked fish for his disciples (cf. *Jn* 21:9). And, therefore, all human activities can become divine.

The feast of Saint Josemaría is a reason for thanksgiving to God because it reminds us with special force of our Lord's eagerness to unite his Life with ours, to help us write the story of our life together with Him, letting Him be the protagonist.

“If you respond to the call the Lord has made to you, your life – your poor life! – will leave a deep and wide furrow in the history of the human race, a clear and fertile

furrow, eternal and divine” (*The Forge* 59).

The life of Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer can be a wonderful stimulus for every Christian to remember that our existence, regardless of how and where it unfolds, can receive Christ’s light and also reflect that light for others. There are no valid excuses: we can say no to the invitation, but we can no longer pretend that we are deaf, that no one told us. “I didn’t think God would get hold of me the way he did, either. But, let me tell you once again, God doesn’t ask our permission to ‘complicate’ our lives. He just gets in: and that’s that!” (*The Forge* 902).

All of us, without exception, are called to be saints. That is the will of God, and that is the only path that leads to complete happiness.

Christ has climbed into your boat,
into mine. It is up to each of us to
make our life a new story of divine
Love. As Josemaría did, and all the
saints who have come before him.

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