

TRINITY NEWS

Easter III Letting Down Nets into the Deeps of Seas and Other Oceans

We see Jesus in the scene at John 21:1-14 on the shore of Lake Galilee as a solitary figure. Seven of his disciples had followed Peter's initiative and gone fishing. They are near the shore after an unfruitful night of fishing. Though he is not recognisable to them he shouts out to ask if they have caught any fish. Anyone could ask that question of fishermen close to shore. The response is negative. The Incognito Christ then tells them to throw their nets over the right side of the boat in order to catch some fish. They catch a large number of fish. The "disciple whom Jesus loved" could have been one of the two fishermen not named at John 21:2. He says to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Peter had been stripped for fishing. He immediately put on his clothes and dived into Lake Galilee, sometimes called the Sea of Galilee. This dressing up for swimming is the reverse of what we would normally do on our beaches! But in Peter's society that would not be publicly acceptable.

The fishermen make for shore. When they get near to the 'beach' they see Jesus cooking fish on a charcoal fire with some bread also visible, perhaps on a bench of some kind. Jesus says to them, "Bring some of the fish you have caught." It is Peter who responds by going aboard the boat and dragging the net ashore. The number of fish is given as 153. The great Augustine thought the number was significant. The writer comments that the weight of fish, though difficult to haul, did not break the net. We are not told if any of the fish they had caught were cooked to be eaten at the breakfast that followed Jesus invitation. They didn't dare ask him if it was really him, but the writer knows better: "They knew it was the Lord." Jesus comes to them and gives them bread and fish. Some invitation and some breakfast! The writer notes that this was the third time that Jesus appeared to his disciples "after he was raised from the dead."

The verb for "letting down" the nets was used by the Greeks for reaching deep down for fish such as the purple one prized for its dye. The other use was to "let down" into the deeps of the mind to seek wisdom and solace.

The solitary figure on the shore resonates calm and life-changing wisdom. "There are some people who change the world by their correctly motivated activity. And there are some people who change the world by achieving a certain quality of consciousness and holding to it"(John A. Sanford). As Prof Allan Anderson once put it, "such a person does nothing, yet everything gets done." The opinions of others about us are

often unhelpful, though we all need sound advice, particularly in our formative years. What God thinks of us, for a believer, is the ultimate benchmark. What does God think? According to the teaching of Christ, God rejoice in our achievements, encourages us to be truly ourselves, overlooks our weaknesses, accepts our repentance, pardons our sins, delights in our small victories over selfishness, and never closes the door on his welcoming love. If you want to pray well, learn to read and write and speak your language very well. What we articulate in prayer is what we are asking God to heed. But apparently God makes sense even of our mutterings in prayer. Practise courtesy at all times and even those who don't like you may have to think twice. Don't have anyone who dislikes you? Congratulations on being one year old! Some get close, but in this matter perfection is not attained. Watch Jesus on the shore of Lake Galilee and see how he teaches his disciples just by being with them. That's the way to teach a child to reach for being "truly human" as well as stretching for a tasty treat!

Bishop Arthur Jones

TO PLAN:

April 17, Wednesday.

- Bible study, 10am.
- Group discussion. *Christian Meditation on the Scriptures*, 7:30pm, Parish Hall

April 18, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Acts 13:15-16, 26-33; Psalm 100; Revelation 7:9-17; John 10:22-30

BANNS OF MARRIAGE

I publish the Banns of Marriage between
John Jerusalem Agustin Tiongson and *Ma. Luisa Gwenn Florido Pabellano*.

If any of you know just cause why they may not be joined together in Holy Matrimony, you are bidden to declare it.

This is the *second* time of asking.