

Homily: 5th Sunday: Cycle C: 2022: Is 6: 1-2, 3-8; Ps 138; 1Cor 1-11; Lk 5: 1-11

“The Call of the Lord”

Today’s readings inspire us to reflect upon the meaning of being called by the Lord. All of us are called to His Love in a unique way, by His quiet voice stirring in our hearts (see the story of Elijah in the Old Testament) or more directly like the prophet Isaiah in the 1st reading today. Some of us are called to become priests and religious; many of us are called to get married and raise a family; some of us are called to remain single to serve the Lord. But **all of us are called to become saints**: we are called *to be holy as the Lord is holy*; remember the call to sanctity begins when we receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

1. **Every one of us is given a unique mission by the Lord** to help build up His Mystical Body: the Church, and to help spread the gift of our Catholic Faith to the whole world, by all that we say, think, and do. Each human being is living at this point in history, in God’s Providential plan to fulfill a specific mission for God. Our life has ultimate meaning and purpose because God is with us and wants us to be as an instrument to draw others to Himself. How exciting this is! We are not simply a “face in the crowd”, but uniquely loved and valued by the Lord for who we are and what we are called to do to build up the Kingdom - if we are open to His calling. **We have a mission.** Have we discovered our mission or calling in life? Today is the day to open our heart and mind up to this most profound reality - if we haven’t already! If we have entered on our vocational path already, the question then is: *how can I live it more faithfully to the Lord?* And then to take the concrete spiritual and human steps to do it: to develop a “**rule of life**” to help us live in the presence of God throughout the day and to serve Him in ever deepening generosity and self-giving love and patience. Love of God/neighbor.
2. **What is the root of all “calls” or vocations? A personal encounter with the Lord!** If the Lord is not REAL to us, then there is NO WAY we are going to turn our life over to Him; and our witness to Him is going to be non-existent or very weak. He is there to be found, but we must ask Him to show His face to us. **When we encounter the Lord like Isaiah did in the first reading today, the response of the human heart is to say: *Here I am, send me Lord!*** I remember that

exciting dynamic in my own life, when I first encountered the Lord in a personal way back in 1989 at Mass, when I was 17 years old. **It was such an awesome experience:** knowing that He truly loved me in a personal and unique way, not an abstract love. The fruit that eventually came out of that experience is that I discovered the reason I was placed on earth at this time: to serve Him in the noble mission as a priest! Wow. The Lord will show His face to all of us, in a unique way depending on our temperament, circumstances, and background - if we humbly ask Him from the depths of our heart and allow Him to work and purify us in the ways of His Holiness over time; to say YES to the mission He is calling us to; because we also have the freedom to say NO, frightening, but real. Instead we should daily pray: *Not my will but Your will be done O' Lord.* This should be the focus of our life – see our Blessed Mother Mary's example in that regard.

3. **Following the Lord's unique call brings inner peace, joy, and ultimate purpose to our life.** Does that mean it is always easy to do so? No!!! It is an ongoing challenge to do God's will rather than our own. *It takes much prayer, reflection, reading, embracing our daily cross, encouragement from God and good spiritual friends, and truly seeking fulfillment on a higher plane - rather than **settling** for the sinful, passing, sensate pleasures of the world, the flesh, and the devil which are always tempting us on some level **because they are right before our eyes.*** We humans are always being tempted by the evil one and our fallen nature to settle for less than the noble mission of holiness that God is calling us to: e.g., Book of Tobit on marriage for a noble purpose; not for lust. **But remember this: the Lord's way is the better way.** Many people today don't know this Truth, and so they seek meaning in the passing pleasures of life, but that in the end **leave us empty** in the depths of our being. *May we all discover our calling in the Lord, and then respond with generosity, so that we can be filled with the joy and peace of the Lord and bring the Good News of Salvation in Him to others – by all that we say and think and do.* As your Pastor, I am here to help you discern your call - if you ever want to talk about these matters. God bless you.

Recommended Reading:

What does God want? By Fr. Michael Scanlon. Our Sunday Visitor Press. 1996.