

FAITH @ HOME

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

READ: Luke 5:1-11

REFLECT: Jesus was always teaching those who followed Him. One day, he was beside the lake of Gennesaret as the people drew near, and saw two boats of fishermen who were washing their nets after fishing. He got into Simon's boat and asked him to push away from the shore, where he began to teach from there. When Jesus was done teaching, He told Peter to go out into deeper water and let the nets down to catch fish. Peter told Jesus that he was tired because he and the other fishermen had fished all night and had not caught any fish. But Peter was willing to obey because Jesus asked. Once they let down the nets, they were so full of fish, that some of the nets were beginning to break! What a miracle! They asked for the other fishermen to bring the other boat to help them. Both boats became so full that they began to sink! Peter was so amazed at Jesus' power that He fell to his knees and asked Jesus to leave (James and John were also there with Peter). But Jesus, Who knew Peter's heart told him not to be afraid because from then on, they would be fishers of men. Once they all returned to the shore, they left everything and followed Jesus.

RESPOND: What an amazing thing Peter, James, and John experienced with Jesus. Here's a few songs that will help you to remember this story and the miracle Jesus performed. As you listen, pretend that you are a fisherman just like Peter, James, and John! (Song Suggestions: Peter, James, and John in a Sailboat, and I Will Make You Fishers of Men).

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: QUANTRILLA ARD



Quantrilla (Quanny) Ard is a faith-based personal and spiritual development writer who lives in the DC Metro area with her husband Donny and three littles (Quentin, Dylan, and Logan). In addition to being a dedicated wife and mother, she is an entrepreneur, doctoral student, and curator of all things lovely. As a woman on her own quest of shining a light on the shadowy, hidden places in her life, she writes as the [PhDMamma](https://www.thephdmamma.com/) (<https://www.thephdmamma.com/>) about things she knows to be true in hopes to encourage others to do the same.

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ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

READ: Luke 5:5-6

REFLECT: I bet Simon wasn't too happy at first with Jesus. After all, Simon was the professional fisherman—not Jesus! Simon and his crew had worked all night, and the fish just weren't biting. Imagine if you try to do something for hours and then someone comes along and tells you that they know the right way. You might be a little frustrated. But Simon listens to Jesus, and he puts the nets back out. To his amazement, the nets fill with fish. There are so many fish that the boats start to sink! This story offers many lessons for our lives but at its heart is the importance of trusting Jesus. So many of Jesus' miracles are about him doing something unexpected, something beyond what we can do ourselves or even dream about.

RESPOND: What do you need help with in your life? How can let down the nets and trust Jesus to fill them? Think of an area in your family life that could use some help. Maybe the challenge is following through with schoolwork or chores. Maybe your family is quick to get angry with one another or yells more than you'd like. Write down one "stretch" goal and put it on the refrigerator. This could be finishing homework by 6 p.m. or promising to talk calmly with each other when angry. Then pray each night for Jesus to help fill your nets to overflowing, to help you address the issue in ways beyond what you imagine.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: RICHELLE THOMPSON



Richelle Thompson lives in the beautiful bluegrass of Kentucky, near Cincinnati, with her husband and their two children. She serves as the deputy director and managing editor of Forward Movement, a ministry of the Episcopal Church and publisher of the daily devotional, Forward Day by Day.

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ADULT AND YOUTH

READ: LUKE 5:1-11

REFLECT: Wow, Luke's scripture really evokes the Way of Love!

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love> The Way of Love is seven practices to bring you closer to Jesus: Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest. The people were so hungry to learn from Jesus, that he ended up teaching offshore from Simon's boat. Jesus showed Simon and his friends that it's possible to catch lots of fish even after you've tried over and over again. That lesson proved to be the greatest lesson of the fishermen's lives. So where does the Way of Love come in? The people learned God's word, but the fishermen learned, turned, and went with Jesus to help him spread the good news of our salvation. Luke captures Turn, Learn, and Go so powerfully that it made me wonder: What would it take for you to turn from everything you have, everyone you know, and everything you do follow someone? What are you willing to sacrifice to get closer to Jesus? In my youth group, some of us decided to turn from too much Instagram and Snapchat, some of us from too much studying, and others from mindless snacking and other unhealthy patterns. What does Jesus call you to turn from to follow him? What abundance do you see in your life that might be a sign of Jesus calling you into a deeper relationship?

RESPOND: Explore the Way of Love practice of Learn:

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love/practice/learn> Starting this week, read a book of the Bible with your family, friends, or youth group. Join the Good Book Club and read Romans or find another book to read as a group. Here's a list of the books of the Bible in order of length: <https://overviewbible.com/shortest-books/>. If you're accustomed to Bible study, use the questions you typically use when reading your book. If not, try these questions: What was your favorite part? What did you like least? What would you leave out? What would you add?

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: MIRIAM WILLARD MCKENNEY



Miriam is a child of God who finds extreme joy parenting her three girls: Nia, Kaia, and Jaiya. She met her husband, David, at the Union of Black Episcopalians conference in 1981. Miriam works as Forward Movement's Development Director, and writes for their family blog, Grow Christians. She was a children's librarian and school media specialist for 20 years before joining Forward Movement's staff. She has recently discovered a love of outdoor fitness in extreme temperatures, as there is no bad weather, just incorrect clothing choices.

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FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

ADULT AND ADULT

READ: Luke 5:1-11

REFLECT Perhaps you can relate to Simon Peter in the Gospel lesson. Tired from working all night long, he can't figure out why Jesus - not a fisherman - would tell him to keep fishing. You can hear the reluctance in his answer, but he does it anyway... to great reward. In that moment where he realizes how Jesus provided for him, he is distressed. He tells Jesus to "go away from him." Perhaps he is feeling shame. Perhaps you know that feeling, of being asked by God to do something, to trust in God's providence, but you're weary and not at all confident that you can see it through. Yet another commitment, God? Put myself up in front of people as a singer, lector, communion minister? Buy extra food, serve a meal at the soup kitchen, teach faith formation? What are you thinking, God? And then we toe into it; we give it a try, we see how God provides, and we see the blessings in our lives. That's not the time to feel shame; that's the moment for gratitude! God doesn't ask us for perfection when we answer the call. God asks us for faithfulness, to simply keep showing up and trust that grace and providence will see us through to wonders we could never imagine.

RESPOND: This week, pay attention to the moments when you feel the tug of the Holy Spirit toward something that seems beyond you. Take some time to imagine a great blessing that could come from saying yes to that call. How would your life and the lives of people around you be changed?



ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: REGINA HEATER

Regina Heater is a self-avowed and practicing ecumenist, story-collector and story-sharer. By day, she literally helps people with their smiles in her work as a dental office manager. The rest of the time she's exploring how to do faith online, from creating and posting prayers (#PrayersForDaysThatEndInY) to participating in and moderating Twitter-based communities such as #SlateSpeak and #InterfaithChat. Connect with her at www.reginaheater.com

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