

5TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The first reading speaks about a brief but graphic description of Isaiah's encounter with the Holy God of Israel.

Isaiah was caught up to the heavenly temple in the year of king Uzziah death, where he beheld God's glory and the ministry of the six-winged seraphim. He bemoaned his sinfulness or "unclean lips" but a seraph purified his lips with a coal from the heavenly altar.

He then volunteered to answer the divine call for a messenger: "Here I am," I said; "send me!"

As a result of his encounter with the Holy God he volunteered for God's mission. He accepted God's commission to preach.

The point is the encounter of Isaiah with God did not leave him in the same condition as he was before the encounter. It made him aware of his limitations and God's readiness to enter into a deeper relationship with him despite his unworthiness. He opened himself to what God was offering him.

In the Gospel we see Jesus engaging Peter, James and John in their daily lives and activities at the lakeshore.

After Jesus had preached from Peter's boat he asked Peter to put out into deep water and lower his nets for a catch.

Peter obeyed a command that made no sense on a professional level.

Peter and his companions were overwhelmed at the catch. Seeing what he could not understand, Peter reacted with fear. He felt before Jesus, admitting his unworthiness and respectfully asked Jesus to leave him.

I will say Peter recognized his littleness and his desire to become all that Jesus intended him to be; a fisher of men.

The message here is that Peter and his companions; James and John opened themselves to the encounter of Jesus which changed them and gave them new

identity and changed their sense of everything that was why they left everything and followed him.

Peter and his companions understood that every encounter with a sign of God's greatness is an invitation to join Isaiah in saying, "Here I am, send me".

St Paul, in the second reading, invites his people to remember how they fell in love with Christ; their encounter with Christ, how the Gospel turned their lives upside down and brought them joy that was deeper than any circumstances they might experience.

He writes, "I am reminding you of the gospel I preached to you which you indeed received and in which you also stand."

St Paul wanted them to allow their encounter with Christ which gave them new life, new identity and dignity help them to manifest Christ in all their undertakings in order for them to be alive in their faith and be fruitful

Today, the church invites all of us to open ourselves to a renewed encounter with Christ. The church wants us to allow our belief in God, our sense of his greatness, our reception of the sacraments and our participation in religious acts help us to deepen our relationship/friendship with God in order to become active in our faith and faithful in our Christian life.

The message for us today is let us allow our personal vocation be born of a living experience of the Lord and do our little part, as humble disciples, weak but willing helpers of Christ.