

Embracing changes and being hospitable.

At our service on Sunday the reading was taken from Mark 1 v. 14-20 (ESV)

Jesus Begins His Ministry - Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." Jesus Calls the First Disciples - Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.

"Follow me" is both the invitation to and the promise of new life. So, what are the nets that entangle us? What are the little boats that contain our life? Who are the fathers from whom we seek identity, value, or approval? What do we need to let go of and leave behind so that we might follow him?

This isn't about changing careers, disowning our family, or moving to a new town. It is about the freedom to discover God's divinity within us. We let go so that our life may be reoriented, so that we can now travel in new direction. When we let go, everything is transformed – including our nets, boats, and fathers. That's why Jesus could tell them they would still be fishermen. But now they would fish for people. They wouldn't become something they weren't already, but they would be changed. They would more authentically be who they already were.

Ultimately, it's about letting go of our own little life so that we can receive God's life. This letting go happens in the context of our everyday activities; work, school, families, paying the bills, fixing dinner, relationships, and trying to do the right thing. It happens in the casting and mending of our nets. These are the times and places Jesus show up and calls into a new way of being and our world changes. It happened for Simon, Andrew, James, and John.

We look forward to meeting our new incumbent Canon Revd. Steve Mansfield at his **licensing service at All Saints, Saughall on Thursday 22nd March**. We plan for new beginnings and being equipped for new ways of being God's people. As we prepare to work with All Saints and Holy Trinity. "New beginnings are often disguised as painful endings." We resist changes. But change is the key to life, because, despite change being seemingly painful, it's ever necessary. Until that set and fixed pattern is broken, how can something new and even more exciting be welcomed? Lord show us new ways of sharing God's love to all our communities. We pray for improved communication and co-operating with each other. We seek prayerful plans and open hearts to welcome Steve and his family.

Note for diaries: Confirmation classes 1st March at The Old School Mollington with communion on Easter Eve 31st March 2018 Chester Cathedral

Blessings, yours in Christ, Jo Pemberton Lay Reader 0783 482 9074