


UMW DEVOTION

Title	What Nets?
Scripture	Mark 1:16-20
Message	<p>Reviewing the gospel recordings of these callings, I was caught by the image used by Mark, "At once they left their nets and followed him" (V 18). Although translations vary, they all reference the immediacy of the first disciples' response to Jesus' invitation, emphasizing the importance of leaving "our nets" behind to follow Jesus.</p> <p>Those of us caught up in the Information Age may not recognize the power in the image of an agricultural society or fishing community. However, growing up I had a classmate from a fishing community whose father returned from the seashore every day, carefully carrying his net over one of his shoulders. Watching him always perplexed me, but during my first visit to the seashore, I witnessed the fishermen and women washing, washing, washing their nets after the catch. I realized then that the nets were, in fact, a precious commodity in an unmechanized fishing world. No wonder both Matthew (4:20) and Mark (1:18) noted "they left their nets and followed him." It took great courage and faith to respond that way.</p> <p>Today we, as a Church, often find ourselves <i>reacting</i> rather than <i>responding</i> to the issues of our modern world, perhaps causing our inability to leave our nets behind. Following the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, the early disciples <i>responded</i>, rather than <i>reacted</i>, to Jesus' call. Had they reacted, they would have asked questions such as, "Jesus, what exactly is the job description? Are there benefits? What is the cost?" Praise be to God, they didn't react; they simply left everything behind without questioning or giving a thought to their safety nets, their income, or their family to follow a stranger.</p>
Closing Question/ Prayer	<p>What metaphorical nets do we have to leave behind in order to be an effective disciple of Jesus Christ, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, to glorify our Creator God through our words and deeds? What is holding us back? Jealousy, pride, anger, greed? Or are we too attached to other things, such as money, our possessions, desire for success or creature comforts? Reflect on those "nets" that hinder our Christian witness and keep us from completely giving ourselves to Christ.</p> <p>Creator God, pour your Holy Spirit upon us to convict us and show us the nets that we need to leave behind in our Christian journey, so we may become effective disciples of Jesus Christ in our homes, churches, work places, communities, nation, and world. We pray this in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.</p>
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