

Trusting the Divine Fisherman

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

Imagine this: a man stands in line at a coffee shop, scrolling through his phone. He orders his latte, only to grow visibly frustrated when it's not ready in under two minutes. We've all been there, caught in the trap of expecting instant results, perfectly tailored to our desires. This yearning for immediate gratification reflects a deeper truth about human nature: our frustration when life doesn't go our way and our struggle to trust when we can't see the outcome.

In Luke 5, we meet Simon Peter in a moment of similar frustration. After a night of fruitless fishing, he is tired, discouraged, and likely questioning his efforts. This sets the stage for what writer-philosopher Peter Kreeft, in *Food for the Soul*, describes as six stages of the Christian life, beautifully unfolding in this scene.

1. The Need/Frustration. Simon Peter's empty nets symbolize our own unmet needs and unanswered prayers. How often do we labor in vain, only to feel disheartened when our efforts fail to yield the results we want?

2. The Invitation to Trust. Enter Jesus, who instructs Peter to "put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." The request likely sounded absurd to an experienced fisherman. Yet, here lies the crux of faith: trusting in the wisdom of God, even when it contradicts our instincts.

3. A Positive Response. Peter's response, "At your word, I will lower the nets," marks a pivotal turning point. Despite his doubts, he chooses to trust. Faith begins when our own understanding ends.

4. The Result of Trust. Peter's trust is met with overwhelming abundance. The immense catch of fish reminds us of St. Teresa's words: "God will not be outdone in generosity." When we entrust our lives to God, God answers in ways far beyond our imagination.

5. The Reaction of Humility. Peter falls at Jesus's feet, exclaiming, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" In the face of divine grace, Peter's humility shines. True encounters with God reveal not only God's greatness but also our need for God.

6. The Call to Evangelize. Jesus reassures Peter, saying, "Do not be afraid; from now on, you will be catching men." Peter's life is forever changed as he accepts the call to bring others into the net of God's kingdom.

Jesus's instruction to "put out into deep water" is a challenge to us all: to move beyond shallow faith and comfortable routines into the depths of trust and discipleship. When we follow God's way, we discover it is always better than "doing it my way." As Peter Kreeft notes, the saints' song is not self-reliance but surrender.

May we, like Simon Peter, trust in God's wisdom, respond to his call, and draw others into his boundless love.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Rudy