3rd Sunday OT B

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Jesus said to them, **"Come after me."** I wonder what that looks like and means for your life today.

Simon and Andrew were casting a net into the sea when they heard those words, and they **"abandoned their nets and followed him."**

James and John were in a boat with their father Zebedee mending the nets. They got out of the boat, **"left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him."**

They left their nets, their boats, and their father.

"Come after me," is not only about going somewhere but also about leaving behind. That's the hard part for most of us. We are pretty good at accumulating and clinging but not so good at letting go. Often, however, growth involves letting go. We accept Jesus' invitation to follow, not by packing up, but by letting go.

We can never get to a new place in life unless we are willing to leave where we are. We can never hold anything new or different unless we are willing to drop what is already in our hands. That means letting go of our nets, getting out of our boats, and walking away from old man Zebedee.

Let's not literalize the nets, boats, or Zebedee. They are symbols and images descriptive of our lives and they hold a key to the **"come after me"** moments of our lives.

What are the nets in your life? What things or relationships are trapping and entangling you today? What patterns, habits, or beliefs have snared and captured you? What nets do you need to leave behind today and what would that take?

What are the little boats that contain your life and keep it small?

Sometimes our boats can become illusions for control, security, or self-sufficiency. What fears keep you from getting out of the boat? In what ways do the routines, familiarity, and comfort of your little boat keep you sailing the same old waters of life? What would it take for you to get out of and walk away from that boat?

Who is old man Zebedee in your life? In what ways are you waiting for or depending on Zebedee to give you an identity, value, and meaning for your life? From whom are you continually seeking approval? How are Zebedee's expectations of who you should be and what you should doing governing your life? And what would it be like to walk away from old Zebedee and reclaim yourself and your life?

Identify the nets, boats, and Zebedees in your life and you will find a **"come after me"** moment. **"Come after me"** is less about where we are going or what we have, and more about who we are becoming.

"Come after me" is Jesus' invitation to every one of us to step into the fullness of our lives. It is a call to become fully alive. It is about becoming more authentic ourselves, living with integrity, and

discovering our truest selves. It asks us to engage the world and others with the heart of God.

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let's look at our life today – the nets, the boats, the Zebedees. What is the **"come after me"** moment for us today, right now, in the current circumstances of our lives? What do we need to leave behind? **Amen**.