

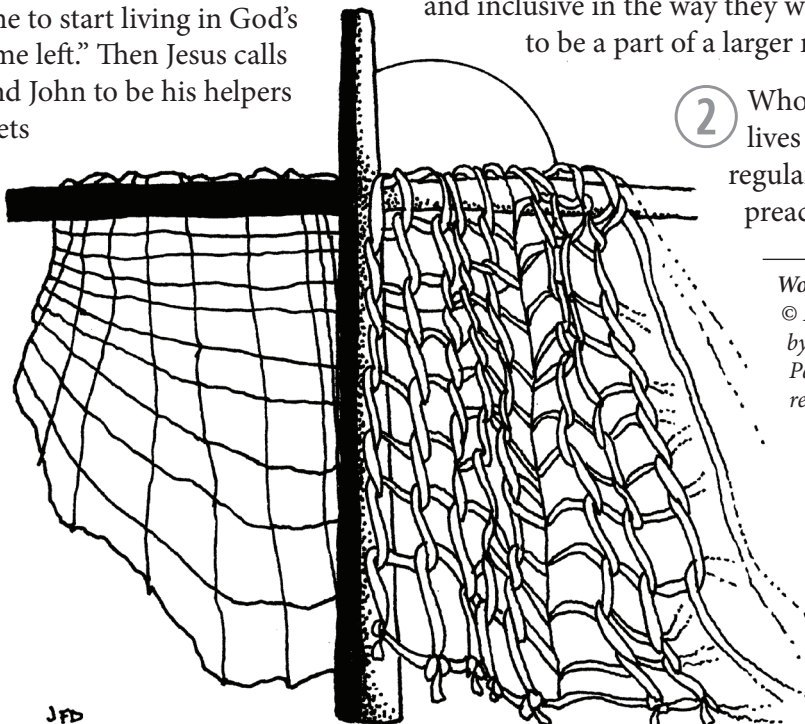
He Practiced What He Preached

This Week's Readings at Mass

- Isaiah 8:23-9:3 • The Prince of Peace
- 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17 • Factions
- Matthew 4:12-23 • Jesus in Capernaum

After Jesus' baptism and temptation in the desert (a peak experience followed by a period of intense testing) he is primed to begin the work that he has prepared his whole life to be able to do. Jesus begins in the small, nondescript town of Capernaum populated mostly by Gentiles (non-Jews). Looking back in scripture, Matthew noticed that specific area had been promised a savior who would bring light to their world of darkness. For all the Jews in his audience, Matthew makes the point that Jesus was the fulfillment of that promise from the prophet Isaiah hundreds of years earlier. Matthew is trying to show that Jesus came to live and minister to and among both Jews and Gentiles and to invite all of them to the fullness of life he was teaching.

Jesus begins his public ministry sounding like John the Baptist. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." We might interpret that now as "Get busy. Get serious. It's time to start living in God's way. There isn't much time left." Then Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be his helpers and companions as he gets busy healing the sick and proclaiming the Good News. If only everyone who preached repentance and the kingdom of God would get busy practicing what they preached! .



"Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Sheepish Question:

What recent occurrences have lifted my spirit and hope?

Questions of the Week

1 What leaders or spiritual teachers have you experienced to be exclusive in terms of who they are speaking or preaching to? What leaders or spiritual teachers have you experienced to be open and inclusive in the way they welcome and invite all to be a part of a larger movement?

2 Whom do you know who lives with integrity and regularly practices what they preach?

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