

Service for Week 19th -25th Jan 2026

by Chaplain Andy



Opening Prayer

Gracious God, we thank you that there is always more to learn, more to explore and more to experience. Give us the ability to look at the world with an enquiring mind, to trust in the future and to celebrate the present.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven.....

Amen

Bible Reading Matt 4: 12-23

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he returned to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali—to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon

called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

This week we continue the Gospel account of when Jesus starts his ministry and recruits his first disciples. The question I am sometimes asked is why were they all men. One reason for this is that men had, in that culture at that time, a much higher social standing than women, this meant they would be listened to when preaching and telling people about Jesus. But the main reason why they were all men was that they would leave their families and travel and stay with Jesus on his travels around the country. Women then were not permitted to travel with, and certainly not stay, with people outside of their own family also they very often had children of their



own to look after at home. But there were many important local women disciples in the different places that Jesus went.

The men Peter, Andrew, James and John left their boats and followed Jesus. We know that their families stayed and James and John's fishing business carried on as in Mark's gospel we read 'Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.' But Peter says to Jesus, "We have left everything to follow you!"

Some people such as Nuns, Monks, Vicars and Ministers feel they are called by God to live a different kind of life which can mean leaving behind everything or some things to devote their time to worship and service. Today Jesus calls us to follow him by living the way of life and the moral standards that he set out in his life and teachings. For most of us living normal lives following Jesus can be the basis of our lives and our world view. It enables us to measure our own and other people's words and actions against the words and qualities of Jesus in the gospels.

Other faiths have their own set of values by which to live and way of connecting with God. Some religions share some of the same values but others can be different.

The Christian faith provides us with a moral compass and a guide to how to live a good and full life ourselves and to live in harmony with others. It also shows us through the accounts of Jesus' life, death on the Cross and resurrection the power of true love, and that even in 'the shadow of death a light has dawned.' That is our Christian belief which brings us hope and comfort even in the most desperate of times.

With his disciples Jesus started his mission moving around the country teaching in synagogues. He was preaching the good news of the kingdom -that is spreading the knowledge of God's love and forgiveness to all. Also having compassion for those who were brought in front of him and healing the sick wherever he went.

As followers of Jesus, we can show our compassion for those around us that are sick. We may not be able to physically heal them, but through our words and actions we can bring comfort to their hearts and minds.

Amen

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus you are still calling to guide me into new experiences of your love and a deeper understanding of your purpose. Help me to walk in your footsteps.

Amen

Prayers inspired by 'Prayerfully Yours' by Nick Fawcett