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“I know myself to be a fisher of men, but still catch nobody”

The Lord wants a definite apostolate from you, such as catching those one hundred and fifty-three big fish — not others — taken on the right-hand side of the boat.

17 March

And you ask me: How is it I know myself to be a fisher of men, can live in contact with many companions, and be able to distinguish towards

whom I should direct my specific apostolate, but still catch nobody? Is it Love that is lacking? Do I lack interior life? Listen to the answer from Peter's lips, on the occasion of that other miraculous draught:

'Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.' In the name of Jesus Christ, begin again. And being strengthened, rid yourself of that indolence! (Furrow, 377)

The apostolic concern which burns in the heart of ordinary Christians is not something separate from their everyday work. It is part and parcel of one's work, which becomes a source of opportunities for meeting Christ. As we work at our job, side by side with our colleagues, friends and relatives and sharing their interests, we can help them come closer to Christ who awaits us on the shore. Before becoming apostles, we are fishermen. After becoming apostles,

we are fishermen still. The same profession, before and after.

Jesus passes by, close to his Apostles, close to those souls who have given themselves to him and they don't realise he is there. 'Cast to the right of the boat, and you will have a catch. So they cast the net, and found before long they had no strength to haul it in, such a shoal of fish was in it.' Now they understand. They, the disciples, recall what they have heard so often from their Master's lips: fishers of men, apostles. And they realise that all things are possible, because it is He who is directing their fishing.

'The other disciples followed in the boat (they were not far from land, only some hundred yards away), dragging their catch in their net behind them.' They bring in the catch and immediately place it at Our Lord's feet, because it is his. This is a

lesson for us, so that we may learn that souls belong to God; that no one on earth has that right over souls; and that the Church's apostolate, by which it announces and brings about salvation, is not based on the prestige of any human beings but on the grace of God. (Friends of God, 264-267)

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