

Everyone in the family knows that when Uncle Buzz says he is going fishing....
it's not really about catching fish...

You see, Uncle Buzz used to work for Hewlett Packard--
that huge mega computer corporation...
He was pretty high up in the managerial chain...

Uncle Buzz used to travel 2 weeks out of every month for business...
computer sales were... and are....intense and highly competitive....
he was under enormous stress most days of the week...

So, when he had the chance,
and his family would get up to their Wisconsin home...

Uncle Buzz would grab his cigar, his fishing pole and go fishing...
and he rarely, if ever, came home with a fish...

So why did he go?

Did he come home frustrated because he never brought a fish home?

Nah....Uncle Buzz went for the silence, the water and the wind...

He went to be as disconnected from technology as he could get...

he went to be as connected to nature as he could get...

he went to watch for signs of where the fish were,

to read the weather in the clouds,

and to watch the cranes fly overhead voicing their ancient call.....

In today's reading,

Peter tells his companions that he is going fishing...

but he, like Uncle Buzz,

is not really interested in catching fish...

**because this Gospel is much 'deeper' than that
it is a highly symbolic, metaphorical, and mystical Gospel ...**

For example:

Peter and the others go fishing at night...and catch nothing.

This is really a metaphor for our unconscious behaviors...

what happens when we live and act 'in the dark'

disconnected from the presence of the Holy...

Then Jesus appears to disciples after daybreak as light begins to flood the earth...

This is really a metaphor for Jesus being the light of the world...

He calls the men, 'children'...obviously not because they are young,

but because they are still spiritually immature...

When the apostles follow Jesus' direction and not act on their own accord,

they catch so many fish that the net does not break!

and the number of fish was 153...the same number of species the people thought inhabited

the earth at that time...hence that number was symbolic of the universality of Jesus'

teachings...

Jesus feeding the men some fish and some bread, was reminiscent of

when he fed the 5,000 on the hillside by the Sea of Galilee some time before...

and on and on...

Perhaps you might remember that last week,

I mentioned the situation of John's community when he was writing his Gospel...

they were under persecution, isolation and were threatened with going extinct...

So John wrote his Gospel to give his community a firm foundation in faith.

One thread of wisdom in this Gospel story was intended to show John's people that by themselves... they could do nothing...

Hence, when Peter and Thomas, Nathanael, James and John the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples, decide for and by themselves to go fishing... and they catch nothing.

**But when they follow the guidance of Jesus, even though they do not recognize him-yet-the light dawns, their nets overflow, and their 'catch' is great.
with me so far????**

**So what does this all mean for us? What is the wisdom for our lives...
Well...**

First of all...

If we want to catch fish, we have to bring a net...or fishing pole...

In other words, we have work to do.

We have to do our part...

We can't just sit back, on the couch and say "God will provide"...

**If we are trying to accomplish something, if we are trying to reach a goal...
we have to do our part...**

AND...

we need to pray...

we need to stay connected to the source of the Wisdom of the Cosmos...

the Presence of the Holy One....

because when WE do those two things:

prepare and pray...

well, I can tell you from my own experience,

the results of my efforts may not be what I wanted or what I had anticipated...

but it was always better than I had dreamed...

I can offer you two examples from my own life...

Every so often I mention that my preparations each week includes biblical research and pondering the story we are reading...

That's my preparation.

Now... when I remember to ask the Holy One to guide me and to inspire me to say what needs to be heard,

invariably more people say to me:

I needed to hear that or...I swear you were talking to me....

invariably my remarks seem to touch more hearts...

than when I forget to pray...

Another example:

I have often told my adult children who are now parents in their own right these days, that my best parenting advice is to pray....

I can honestly remember that when they were teenagers and there was a difficult situation or a tough conversation to be had...

when I remembered to invite God's presence into the situation...

not to pray for a particular result, but to pray for the best thing, the right thing to happen....

the situation may not have worked out as I thought it needed to work out...

but it always worked out far better than I had imagined...

I can honestly attest to you,

that inviting God's presence, praying in this way...

remaining intentionally connected to the presence of God...

acknowledging my own need for a greater wisdom and strength than my own, has most often, if not always, led to situations working out better than I had hoped even if they didn't work out the way I had wanted....

Don't just take my word for it....

Try it out for yourself:

This week: in any situation you may find yourself in...

Invite God into the situation....

And ...do your work...

Do what you feel needs to be done...

but don't pray for particular results...

but pray that the best thing happens---

the highest good for all concerned, happens..

then be open and see what fills your net!

Yep...Uncle Buzz, Peter and all of us here have one thing in common...

when we go fishing...it is not always about the fish!

Amen.