

February 7, 2021

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Mark 1:29-39

Source of Strength

Simon Peter's mother-in-law speaks:

"Peter was like a son to me, even though I did not bear him. So, when he put down his fishing nets and started to follow the Teacher, I paid attention. Some of the other women in the village said they were irresponsible, and if they stopped the work we counted on, we all would starve. "Fishing for people!" they scoffed, "THAT won't put bread on the table." I never said much in those conversations. In truth I never said much at all.

When we heard the Teacher was coming for a meal, I felt this might be my chance to listen, to finally understand his teachings. The other women and I worked all the day before and all through the night to make everything just right. By midday, I felt heavy and moved slower and slower. Finally, the other women saw and urged me to bed, but I was determined to meet the Teacher so without a word I tried to keep to my work. At last I took to bed. I tried to stay awake, but the sickness made me sleep.

When I woke up, the Teacher was there. That strange light that always seemed around him shone in the darkness of the room. His hand on my forehead was cooling and his touch was light, but it filled me with a new strength. All at once, I understood his strange command. To fish for people was to bring them near to God, to one another. I wanted to be one of those fishers, and in that moment, I knew that I would be able to. No longer heavy with fever, I rose.

Serving quietly was the chance to be near the table, and to hear what the Teacher was saying. As fast as I could bring bread and wine to the table, it was gone! First, the neighbors came pouring in, and then people I had never seen before. With that cool touch, he healed them all.

Early the next morning, I was up before the rest and I saw The Teacher slip out the door. I understand what it's like to need a few quiet minutes with the Holy One.

So, when the others asked where he was, I kept silent. But when they started to get ready to go, to look for him, I packed a bag and I followed. And I'm following still. We don't have to be preachers or have our names recorded in books to follow. We just have to be ready, to rise up, to listen and to go when he calls."