

## The Jesus Movement

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Jesus says: "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." I have to wonder: 2000 years ago would a poor Jewish fisherman even understand what "catching people" means?

"When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed (Jesus)." This I don't have to wonder about. When Simon and his partners James and John, the Sons of Thunder leave the "family business to follow *Jesus*; father Zebedee, left on the boat, *has* to be wondering: "You can't even help me get all these fish off the boat?"

My family business was a newspaper and printing company that I worked at until my 30's with my Dad and grandfather. I remember telling Dad that I couldn't work in August before my freshman year in high school because we had voluntary/required double football practices every day. Dad was not happy that I was leaving *work* to play football.

But leave the family business Simon and the Sons of Thunder did – to "catch people." What *does* that really mean? Well, Jesus is starting a Movement.

Now if you google "Jesus Movement" the AI, Artificial Intelligence "bot" will tell you that the "Jesus Movement" was a Christian revival that began in the Sixties – a reaction to the counterculture of the time, and disillusionment with the hippie movement. As much as I loved the Doobie Brothers singing "Jesus is Just Alright," I never caught that Jesus Movement.

But our past Episcopal Presiding Bishop Michael Curry positions the Jesus Movement this way: "Jesus did not establish an institution, though institutions can serve his cause. He did not organize a political party, though his teachings have a *profound* impact on politics. Jesus did not even found a religion.

No, Jesus began a movement, fueled by God's Spirit, a movement whose *purpose* was and is to change the face of the earth from the nightmare it often *is* into the dream that God intends...."

We've seen other Jesus Movements throughout history...

We have Breaking News. You're in the Situation Room with Wolf...no, you're not in the Situation Room with Wolf Blitzer – you're in the Situation Room with St. Cyprian.

St. Cyprian was a bishop and martyr just 250 years after the birth of Jesus Christ. So, let's bring in our Special International Correspondent, St. Cyprian:

*The true state of affairs is this. Va-lerian (the Roman Emperor) has issued an edict to the Senate to the effect that bishops, presbyters and deacons shall suffer the death penalty without delay.*

*Saint Sixtus II, bishop of the Church of Rome (the Pope), was arrested while celebrating the sacred liturgy in the year 257 by order of Emperor Valerian. That day, August 6, (Sixtus) was put to death with four deacons.*

*Four days later, another deacon, Saint Lawrence (my middle name is Lawrence), became a martyr of the same persecution.*

But Valerian wasn't just after *bishops, presbyters and deacons*. He went after Christian *Senators, distinguished men and members of the equestrian class, Ladies of the upper class, even members of the imperial staff.*

Now St. Lawrence was one of seven deacons in charge of the "purse, (read treasurer)" from *which* they took care of the poor and needy. After the death of the St. Sixtus, Deacon Lawrence gave the poor and needy the rest of the money on hand *in* the "purse"; and Deacon Lawrence even sold expensive vessels in order to give more money away. (I wonder what the Good Shepherd Altar Guild would think if Father John started selling off our valuable altar vessels.)

When ordered by the Prefect of Rome, a greedy pagan, to deliver the church's treasure, Deacon Lawrence gathered together the city's poor, needy and sick and presented them to the Prefect: *This is the Church's treasure!* For this, Deacon Lawrence suffered a slow, agonizing death – he was roasted on an iron grill over a fire.

Now that's a Movement, a Jesus Movement.

What about us, today? Here's former Presiding Bishop Curry again: "(in today's Jesus Movement) we need people who will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, who will love justice, live mercy, and walk *humbly* with God – just like Jesus."

You, sisters and brothers, are preparing for just that. Today, just like every Sunday, you've heard the Word of God.

In just a few minutes you'll receive fuel and transformation from the body and blood of Jesus Christ. You'll be fully equipped to follow Jesus – to get moving in the Power of the Holy Spirit.

2000 years ago in Jesus' time "catching people" was probably a better image than it is *today*.

Today, I think Fr. Joe employs a better image for “catching people.” At Good Shepherd, we don’t “catch” people...we receive them into our open hands – allowing them to land (softly), but always giving them the freedom to take off in whatever direction the Spirit calls them.

The Jesus Movement, however, is a truly timeless *image* that has survived 2000 plus years – *and* following Jesus today still requires movement.

Let us continue our preparation at this Eucharistic celebration in order that we can truly “go forth in the name of Christ” “proclaiming” the Good News, “loving” justice, “living” mercy, and “walking” with God – “just like Jesus.”

We are the Jesus Movement.

Alleluia! Alleluia!