

**Fr. Nick Dant's Homily, Saint Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis**  
**Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Feb. 9-10, 2019, Cycle C**

In the midst of a Temple liturgy wrapped in incense, Isaiah has an awe inspiring vision of God calling him where myriads of Seraphim cry out: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!" So overwhelmed is Isaiah to God calling him to be a prophet that he must protest his unworthiness: "Woe is me, I am doomed! For I am a man of unclean lips..." Paul the Apostle protests his unworthiness too to have been called to be an Apostle: "I am ...not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God." In one place Paul professes he persecuted the church to the point of death.

Simon Peter makes the same protest of unworthiness, when he witnesses the great catch he and his companions haul with the aid of Jesus. Overwhelmed being in the presence of divine power, Simon Peter becomes only too aware of his littleness, his sinfulness and cries out to Jesus: "Depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man."

For these past several weeks of Ordinary Time, we have been reflecting on our call from God. Like Isaiah the Prophet, Paul the Apostle and Peter the Apostle, you and I too are called to mission by God. We are called and sent by God in our own baptism: "You are my beloved son, you are my beloved daughter." When it sinks in that God has really called me for mission - to be a partner with Jesus - in proclaiming and bringing about God's Kingdom - the whole reality can be mind-blowing - and our first response is not me! Not only am I not worthy, but I am too much of a sinner. I have no special talents, I just don't have it. Our response is the same as Isaiah's, Paul's and Peter's!

However, as with Isaiah, Paul, and Peter, God is not deterred by our inadequacies or our sinfulness. God is phased not one iota that none of us will ever be totally successful in our mission He calls us to. We forget the success of mission as followers of Jesus does not depend on us. God sends a seraphim to take an ember from the altar and touch the lips of Isaiah saying: "See, now that this has touched your lips, your wickedness is removed, your sin purged." Paul the Apostle admits: "...by the grace of God I am what I am." And Jesus tells Peter in the face of his protesting: "Do not be afraid from now on you will be catching men." The mission of proclaiming God's Kingdom is totally dependent on God's grace - a grace you and I received the moment we were Baptized.

God is not asking us to be perfect instruments in His hands. God just asks us to say yes to His call, and God will do the rest! Realizing that we have God's grace, we have nothing to fear then - not even our own sinfulness or failures. Again, Jesus says to Peter: "Do not be afraid." And "they left everything and followed Him." Jesus asks no less of us, to follow Him, not being afraid to take on His Mission - responding as Isaiah did: "Here I am... send me!"