There are no translations available.

"But at your command I will lower the nets."
(Lk. 5:5)

Jesus, when he had finished teaching, sat down in Simon Peter's boat and told Peter and his companions to put out into deep water and lower their nets for a catch. Peter explained that they had been hard at it all night long and had caught nothing. "But at your command," he said, "I will lower the nets."

When they had done this, they caught such a great number of fish that the nets began to tear. Some of his companions then came to help him, and between them they filled the two boats until they nearly sank.

Peter, completely amazed, as were his partners James and John, fell at Jesus' feet saying, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." But Jesus told him that he should not be afraid and that from then on Peter would be a fisher of men. From that moment, Peter, James and John became followers of Jesus.

This is the account of the miraculous catch of fish, symbolic of the Apostles' future mission. Peter's attitude is not only a model for the other Apostles and for those who would succeed them, but also for every Christian.

"But at your command I will lower the nets."

After an unproductive night, Peter, an experienced fisherman, could have smiled and refused Jesus' invitation to cast the nets in broad daylight, a less favorable time of day. Instead, going beyond his own reasoning, he puts his faith in Jesus.

This is a typical situation that all believers are often called to face due to the very fact that they are believers. Every day their faith is put to the test in a thousand different ways.

Following Jesus requires determination, commitment and perseverance. Everything in the world around us, however, seems to be leading us toward mediocrity, inviting us to take it easy, to let things go their way.

When the task appears too great, impossible to achieve and doomed to fail, what should we do? What is needed is the strength to go ahead, to resist whatever negative influences may come from the world around us, from social pressure, from friends, from the mass media. It is a difficult struggle that must be carried on day by day, or better still, hour by hour.

But, if we take on the task and welcome it, it will help us to mature as Christians and enable us to experience that the extraordinary words of Jesus are indeed true, that his promises are fulfilled, that this life can become a divine adventure, a thousand times more fascinating than any other we can imagine.

For example, we will be able to bear witness to the fact that while in this world life may often be difficult, dull and fruitless, following God we can experience the abundance of his gifts, the hundredfold in this life and eternal life. The miraculous catch of fish repeats once again.

"But at your command I will lower the nets."

How can we put this Focolare Word of Life into practice?

We can do so by making the same choice as Peter — "But at your command ..." We should have faith in God's word; we should not cast doubt on what he asks of us. Furthermore we must base our behavior, our life, everything we do, on his word.

Our lives will then be based on something truly solid and secure. We will be astonished to see that in those very situations where every human resource fails, he intervenes, and even where it would be humanly impossible, life is born.

- Chiara Lubich

Each month a Scripture passage is offered as a guide and inspiration for daily living. This commentary, translated into 96 different languages and dialects, reaches several million people worldwide through print, radio, television and the Internet. Ever since the Focolare's beginnings, founder Chiara Lubich (1920–2008) wrote her commentaries each month. This one was originally published in February 1983.

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Read more on this topic:

- Chiara Lubich, God's Word to Us: Short Reflections on Living the Word , New City Press, 2012.
- Tom and Mary Hartmann, Gifts from Heaven , New City Press, 2012.
- Leahy, Brendan, "Movements and Evangelization,"
- Ecclesial Movements and Communities, New City Press, 2011, pp109–118.

Next month:

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"Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him" (Jn 14:23).