

Greetings from God the Father and from our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and from the Holy Spirit. Amen

Again, Again and again

John 21:1-19

The Gospel states ***After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee), and he revealed himself in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.***

Jesus AGAIN revealed Himself to His disciples. You would think that after the second time Jesus revealed Himself it would sink in with the disciples that He is RISEN, and what that meant. They did not! Jesus had to come again, again and again! We know that it really did not sink in with the disciples because in the Gospel text for the third Sunday after Easter, we hear that Peter is going fishing. The other disciples wanted to go also. The language in the words, "I am going fishing" reveals a mood of impatience, a response of maybe waiting too long. Peter has become

impatient with the wait. Peter is like us when we wait for along time. Peter is a person who wants to react rather than just waiting. Most of time you want to do something, rather than to wait on the Lord; you want to be in control. You may even complain to the Lord, “why are You taking so long?” We sinfully get impatient with the Lord. It is a sin not waiting patiently for the Lord, but the heart of the sin is that you do not trust Him in His timing and do not trust Him to give you the BEST always. Jesus said He would come again to the disciples while they were in Galilee area. And HE WILL COME AGAIN.

In our Gospel, we really do not know what day it is. It is after the Sunday evening that Jesus revealed Himself to His disciples without Thomas' presence. Also, it is after Jesus came to the disciples with Thomas being present. Those two occurrences of Jesus appearing would be two times with His disciples and in our Gospel text it tells us that it is “again” Jesus revealed Himself to the disciples. The disciples were waiting for Jesus; they did not know what to do except they were to go in Jesus' name. Because the disciples really did not fully know what that means, they turned to the one thing they knew best, fishing. Fishing to disciple is like you continuing doing something the way you do it because it is second habit. It is the habit to hang onto what is more familiar than to move forward

with uncertainty. So the disciples went fishing. They fished all night and caught nothing. This story should seem familiar to us and to at least three of the disciples. When Jesus called Peter, James and John to “Follow Him” they were fishing all night and they had caught nothing. And Jesus told them where to cast their net. After Jesus told them where to cast their net, they caught an over abundant amount of fish.

So in our text today, Jesus appears on the shore and calls out to his disciples, “dear children” or hey guys, “have you caught any fish?” And of course, the disciples answer “nothing.” Why did Jesus choose this time and in this place to appear to His disciples? The Lord knew that it is the best time; they may have felt that they were left on their own, even, that they were forsaken by Jesus in the upper room. Did they understand that Jesus will continue providing for them? They did not. You may feel similar today, is Jesus really providing for me? Jesus appearing to His disciples is a blessing for them as well as it is for you. Jesus’ blessing is that He provides for his disciples and for future believers in Christ. Jesus provides blessings for His disciples by reminding His disciples that they were to be fishers of men and that Jesus was sending them out to proclaim the Good News and to feed His sheep, the believers, with His Word and Sacraments.

Jesus is pointing toward the Lord's Supper by providing the fish and the bread. The fellowship that the Lord desires to have with you. The fellowship He desires for you to have with each other. Jesus once again shows His disciples that He provides for both their physical bodies and their souls. Jesus provides for you, me, and all believers who are in His church. Jesus in these verses is instituting the public office of the ministry, pastors. Jesus is feeding, serving His disciples with His presence – with His Word and with His Sacraments – and He continues to feed and serve us, you and me, with His presence through the church in the office of public ministry of His church through His means of Grace, His Word and Sacraments. Jesus is providing His Word and Sacraments through men called by Him.

Jesus comes, reinstates, and serves you no matter what you have done. He restored Peter to the fellowship with Him and with the other disciples. And since He did it for His disciples; He will do it for you, no matter what sin you have done – that is His merciful nature toward us. The disciples were no better than you and the reverse is also true, you are no better than they are. They were sinners. You are a sinner. They had doubts, fears if Jesus really will provide. They did not stay with Jesus, through His passion of the cross. They are in need of Jesus' forgiveness of sin, His guidance, His Word. As Jesus restored Peter, Jesus comes to

restore you because of His Love for you and for all. Jesus comes **again, again and again** offering you His forgiveness of sins, eternal life. Jesus is present where His Word is proclaimed. Jesus being **present again, again and again**, He feeds your faith, strengthens your faith, and guides you with His Word. He is present here today and every Sunday. With certainty, the Lord assures you of HIS PRESENCE again and again each Sunday. With certainty, He has not left you on your own. With certainty, Jesus has paid the full price, once and forever on the cross to restore you in fellowship with Him, with His heavenly Father and with each other! With certainty, Jesus will come for you when it is time to leave this world and He will bring you to His heavenly banquet that has no ending.

And may the peace of God, which is beyond all human comprehension, keep your hearts and minds through your faith in Christ Jesus. Amen