

**THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK**

("I'm going fishing.")

John 21: 4

"We're going to go fishing tomorrow. Want to come?" Conversations like that happen all the time. Friends decide to go fishing and they invite other friends to go along even though fishing can be pretty solitary. And so when we hear in today's gospel that Peter says to the other apostles that he is going fishing we mentally check that off and say, "Okay." We forget that Peter is no sportsman going fishing. Peter fished for a living. As a matter of fact, didn't Jesus call him—and the others—away from fishing on the Sea of Galilee so they could become "fishers of men?"

So, when Peter says he is going fishing, He's not just going fishing he really is saying something else. He is saying that he is going "back" to fishing. In effect, he is giving up on the "Jesus thing." Fishing is what he grew up with. Fishing was something he knew a lot about. Fishing was in his blood. This "Jesus thing" didn't seem to be working out. Yes, Jesus did rise from the dead. And yes, Jesus did appear to different apostles and others. But it has been some time now and—nothing. So what are the apostles supposed to do, sit around and look at each other? These are men. They have to "do" something. So fishing it is.

But they work all night and they come up empty-handed. You can't go back. That's the lesson. There is nothing there—ever, even if we like to think there is. You can't go back once you have met Jesus. But Jesus doesn't leave them alone. He goes to them. He calls out to them. He gives them a directive. And they are overwhelmed by the response this time. When the Lord is there and calling the shots, suddenly there is abundance. And in this abundance his presence becomes known. It is no different with us now than it was with the apostles then. Jesus is real. Jesus is present. Jesus is involved with our lives too. Jesus speaks a word that directs us and when we heed his word, abundance follows. The only question is: Whether we believe this or not. Well, do we? And that is the question of the week.