

Third Sunday after Epiphany, Holy Trinity, 26 /1/2020

Matthew 4:12-25

During my time at St. George's every year around December the bush was invaded by cicadas with their constant noise.

At no time, however, did anyone complain to me that they could not hear me.

I thought that they were concentrating so much on my words that the noise of the cicadas was blotted out and did not matter to them. Ha! Ha! I can kid myself, but it is a good illustration of what comes out of today's Gospel.

I figure you hear what you are listening for. Ladies tell me that it is 'selective hearing'.

In last week's Gospel, Jesus asked the question, "What are you looking for?"

This is still our challenge to-day along with "Who are we listening to? and "What will we value most in our lives?"

These are important spiritual questions for all of us.

They have us to consider our past, our present spiritual life and our future direction to be taken.

To-day's Gospel gives us Jesus making it quite clear what we are looking for, what we are listening to and what we must value above all else.

First, looking at the past he has one word "Repent".

We are all sinners, we each fall short of our calling, we have made mistakes, we have fallen.

Our prayer is "God be merciful to me, a sinner"

This does not mean that all of us are notorious sinners or that we are wicked, but it does mean that we are human and that falling, and sinning is part of our humanity.

Jesus tells us to get up and try again, we are forgiven, loved and free.

So repent, turn around and try to listen for God's voice.

This brings us to the present when we listen to God's voice telling us that the Kingdom of God has come near.

Look around for signs of the Kingdom of God in the present, here and now.

Look around in people for signs of the fruits of the Spirit according to Paul in his letter to the Christians in Galatia: love, joy, peace,

forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Look into yourself to see the signs that the Kingdom of God is present in you right now in that you possess at least some of the fruits of the Spirit in your life.

Look around you, listen to God's Word and work on this part of your spiritual journey showing that the Kingdom of God has come near.

Now to the future, Jesus tells us, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people."

This is it: we are called to be fishers for people, every one of us and all of us collectively as the community of the Body of Christ, the church who meet in this place.

All the things that we do in this place, the meetings we attend, the fundraising in which we are engaged, and the other things, like caring for the gardens, or a leaking roof, they are most important for us, but really, we are called to build up the Body of Christ

We are to be a light to the world, called to fish for people, to be ambassadors of Christ, evangelists.

This is the charge to us to-day "let your light shine".

Repent, and it will shine, look for signs that the Kingdom of God has drawn near, and it will shine, Follow Christ, and it will shine.

Visualize that you are watching this incident in to-day's Gospel and relate it to life in the twenty first century, your life.

Then make your choice: repent, look for signs and follow Jesus.