

**3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY YEAR B 2021 REFLECTIONS**  
**THE CALL TO REPENTANCE AND MISSION**

The central theme and the connecting link in our first reading and the Gospel are a call to ***Repentance*** and ***Mission***.

The Ninevites heard the voice of God through the prophet Jonah's preaching and they responded with immediate repentance. They began to reform their lives, and God had mercy on them. This tells us clearly in black and white He is Merciful. There is a possibility of turning to God in whatever situation and circumstance we find ourselves in. The Mercy of God has no limit. Jesus Christ echoes the same thing in His mission of following John the Baptist, the mission of repentance. He called people to repent and embrace the good news of the kingdom.

Repentance entails recollecting ***our old self, our thoughts, attitudes, habits, goals, and character***. All our values, pursuits, and hopes would have to undergo a TOTAL TRANSFORMATION. This is the call of old self to new self. We must let go and respond to the call of repentance.

- It involves turning away from evil things, dishonesty, immorality, and darkness.
- It involves a new way of living; from selfishness to loving and caring.
- It involves being delivered from the slavery of sin to the freedom of the children of God.
- It involves a journey of growth and development and struggle to achieve victory.
- It involves self-sacrifice and conversion which is a continuous process.

What is our response toward this conversion? This will lead us to the call of discipleship which we are being invited to today. The call between the first apostles and Jesus himself was a very personal moment. It reflects the very call to the Christian life. There are three dimensions we must note in this encounter. ***The call, leaving the nets, and following Jesus.*** As He walked around the shore there were many people, but He focused on four characters, Peter, Andrew, John, and James. Their eyes met and the attraction was there, ***“FOLLOW ME.”*** He called them for a purpose as He is doing today in this church to you and me.

***The Leaving.*** They left the ***nets behind.*** Being with Christ they did not need anything else. He was all to them. To follow him we must leave the nets behind, ***conflicts, tensions, darkness in the world, and in human hearts.*** We need to escape from ***anger, jealousy, bad desires, and revenge.***

- ***We are called not to leave the world behind but to stand and conquer the world.***
- ***We are called to be light and salt in that same world.***
- ***We are called to turn to Christ and fix our eyes on Him thus seeing the world with a different perspective. We need to see our married life, vocation, our work, and the world with a different outlook.***

Before we change the world, we need to change the world within us. We need to leave behind bad attitudes and actions. We need to get rid of ***gossip, deception, prejudice, greed, arrogance, and anger.*** All these are nets which should be left behind today.

We need to open a whole new world in us like the Ninevites. They lived in the same city ***but in a different world. They were changed on the inside.***

We need to follow Christ by:

- Standing firm to the sacredness of life from birth to natural death.
- Building bridges for people, not walls.
- Speaking and standing for truth and justice at all costs.
- Guarding and protecting the dignity of sexuality in this world.
- Guarding and protecting the dignity of Marriage and other vocations.
- Stressing the importance of spiritual life in our society.
- Being Jesus to others by caring and loving others and the culture around and within us.

Christ is calling us today through our Baptism to be His agents of change in the world.

He is calling us to leave those nets behind which compromise our mission.

He is calling us not only to live for ourselves but for others too.

He is calling us for a ***reason and purpose larger than ourselves, like the Apostles.***

**WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO HIS CALL TODAY?**