

In reading Matthew's writing describing the recruitment of early disciples one must ponder how it occurred that four strong men would leave their occupations and their families to follow Jesus so abruptly.

I reflect on my personal faith journey to understand these actions.

Being raised with a strong catholic education from an early age, I recall several teachings that have formed the basis of my faith. The first of these teachings directed us to be prepared for our master when he comes. Not meaning the end of days but rather being prepared for when Christ comes calling on us individually. During our wait our thoughts and our words should prepare our hearts and minds. Our actions need to keep us vigilant as we do not know when the master will arrive. Our lamps must have oil and we must be awake.

Later, I was educated on the pillars of the Holy Cross. The pillar of the heart instructs us to search for a personal vocation in service to the church and the world. Some of us modified the challenge of our first catholic president, who we remember this week, and adopted the charge to 'ask not what Christ can do for you but what you can do for Christ'.

With that background we accept that our personal vocation will be revealed to us. Often this occurs when we least expect it and in ways that we cannot predict. As these early disciples left their boats and the lives on the shore, we come to realize that these were not random acts but rather four souls-in-waiting that were awake and joyful when their calling came.

We too are called to be disciples of Christ, using our unique talents in the profession we are called to. There are no greater or lesser professions, only greater or lesser disciples. Recognize each of us are at different stages of our journey. For those who have not yet had a calling, be prepared. For those who have been called, take direction to use your talents to their fullest, our master expects nothing less.

As disciples of Christ, we need to act as mentors for those not close to or not exposed to the faith. In this duty each of us will utilize our unique talents. As disciples of Christ, we renew our faith with our service. As disciples of Christ, we express with our mouth and believe in our heart that Jesus was raised from the dead.

During this Advent season let us prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus, reflect on our personal journey, assist others on their path, and bring the message of faith to those who may be marginalized.

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