



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 21, 2024

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

“Answering Jesus’ Call”

Greetings of peace, love, and joy!

Every year, communication technology keeps changing or updating their systems. Gone are the days when every call you receive you answer them right away. Today, with caller identification, you can either suspend, cancel, or answer the call, be it someone you know or do not know. If you know that it is an important call, especially when it concerns family, health, or work, you answer right away. Such is the trend these days. But what about responding to God’s call and invitation to life and to be His disciple today? Do we suspend, cancel, or answer it?

Our Gospel account this Sunday is about the call of Jesus’ first disciples. As He passed by the Sea of Galilee, He saw these fishermen, Simon and Andrew, casting their nets. He said, *“Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.”* Peter and Andrew heard Jesus’ invitation and responded, abandoning their nets and following Him. Jesus went on further and called James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They left their father and followed Him.

What is striking in this Gospel account is the response given to His invitation to follow Him. These four men left their livelihoods and family. They did not present any conditions to Jesus’ call. They answered Jesus’ call and followed Him.

Our journey of life and faith is also a call to follow. Who? Jesus! It is not only saying with a big “Yes” but a total commitment of trust and faithfulness. More often, unlike the disciples, we set conditions to follow. We bargain if and only if things go along well. When difficult times come, we seek easy and comfortable ways. For the most part, we ignore His call and live according to our ways and not God’s.

To answer Jesus’ call, we need to realize and respond to His call of conversion, “repent and believe in the Gospel.” Through our conversion, we start slowly but surely to become followers and eventually witness Jesus, especially in our very secularized world. When we do, we can open our eyes of faith and know the truth that Jesus taught. We are also able to open our hearts to do what Jesus did. In doing so, then we know we are being called like the disciples.

There is no doubt each of us is being called to follow the Lord. Regardless of what situation in life we are in, the invitation is there. The question that we need to ask ourselves is this, “am I ready to commit myself to the Lord?” It may take time for us to answer, but one thing is certain: to be with the Lord is the best way to live our lives. It may be daunting because of discipleship’s demands, but the reward can never be equated to any reward we may get in this earthly life.

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual