

THE FISHERMAN AND THE CARPENTER

The night's fishing on Lake Galilee had not gone well for Simon Peter. His business partners in the other boat, James and John, had not caught anything either. They pull their boats up to the water's edge and start to wash their nets.

Simon Peter has met Jesus the Carpenter before. They were both in the crowd at Bethany listening to John the Baptist. Later on, Jesus came to the synagogue in Capernaum and had supper at Simon's home. He could certainly teach and had all sorts of healing powers. Quite amazing!

So now Jesus gets into Simon's boat and asks him to put out a little from the shore. The crowd settle down on the beach, and listen quietly as Jesus' voice rings out over the smooth water. Simon mends his nets – he has no fish to take to market today.

Then Jesus the Carpenter says something surprising: "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch". Simon thinks this is a waste of time, but does so anyway. Suddenly the nets are so full that they are breaking. Simon calls to James and John to bring their boat over to help. Even then, the two boats are so full that they begin to sink.

Simon is frightened. He knows that something miraculous has happened which he cannot explain. If Jesus can control shoals of fish, then his words about God are powerful too. Simon has a huge choice to make – to remain a fisherman, or to follow his new Master.

Simon the Fisherman becomes Simon Peter the Disciple. God does not always ask us to leave our ordinary lives, but He does invite us to make Him part of our life journey. As it says in the Bible in Proverbs: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths".

Naomi Gordon-Smith

St Mary's, Buriton