

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES
February 6, 2022
Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time
Isaiah 6:1–2a, 3–8 † 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 † Gospel: Luke 5: 1–11



Reflection by: Sister Pat Crowley, OP

We hear from Isaiah, Paul, and Peter, three of the greatest witnesses in the Bible. Each speaks of feeling worthless. What do we understand by that word?

Isaiah receives a vision of Seraphim crying out, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.” Isaiah reacts with shame, “I am a man of unclean lips.” The angel swoops down with a burning coal and cleanses his lips. Isaiah is doomed to be made clean through suffering, to be made able to speak of God.

Paul considers himself the least of the apostles, not fit to be called an apostle because he persecuted the church. Unworthy but the grace of God does not discard him but appoints him a key Apostle, even though he will never meet Jesus.

Peter and the famous story of fishing and catching nothing. Being told to try again. Does a fisherman have to be told to “try again”? The results are amazing. Peter’s reaction, “Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.”

Shouldn’t an experience of God result in feelings of peace, forgiveness, and joy—not shame? Their reactions are not really ones of shame. They are expressing humility.

Each is forced to compare their self with the presence of God. When one meets the holiness of God head-on, they can glimpse by contrast the humanness in themselves. It is far less! They do not shine like the stars because they have encountered the real star, bursting with light. We realize we are far less than God. This reality is not a bad one. A false sense of importance cannot make me holy—only God can make us holy.

If we are truly unworthy and it allows us reception of God’s love, then it is worth it. In the words of the Roman Centurion: “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed” (Matt 8:8).