

## **Father Larry Richards**

### **Moderator, Bread of Life Community**

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**February 4, 2001**

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 6: 1-2a, 3-8; 1Corinthians 15: 1-11, 3-8, 11 ; Luke 5: 1-11

Good morning! Did I tell you? Great readings! Great readings! And the readings I think today if you can talk about them they have everything to do with the holiness of God, the lowliness of man, and the commission of God. We need to look first at the holiness of God. What God has done. All three readings touch that. If we go to the gospel, well first let us go to the Old Testament to the call of Isaiah and it is in your pew bibles page 751. The rest of it is Isaiah chapter 6. And it talks about the vision in the year king Uzziah died. I saw the Lord seated on a high and lofty throne, with the train of his garment filling the temple. He saw the Lord. Seraphim were stationed above; each of them had six wings. In verse 3 they all cried out "holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!" they cried out one to the other. "All the earth is filled with his glory!" At the sound of that cry, the frame of the door shook and the house was filled with smoke or incense. And so first of all he gets this vision of the glory of God. And the same with the gospel today. If you go to the gospel and you sit there and see what happens in the gospel they can't do anything. They tried everything. They can't catch anything and God says go ahead and put your nets in. Okay you think you know everything well, we'll show you. And they went and they put their nets down and they caught so many fish they didn't know what to do with them. If you go to the second reading today, here's Paul crying out that "I preach to you that Christ died for our sins. And on the third day He was buried and He was raised from the dead. He is alive!" And so he is talking about the power of the resurrection. So each thing. Everything. Each of these people would become great preachers. Isaiah is the Old Testament. Peter, James and John in the gospel. Paul later on first had to deal with an experience of the holiness of God. Of the grandeur of God. Of the all powerful omnipotence of Almighty God. And so to must it be with us. You know again, they were simple things, maybe not Isaiah wasn't simple, but here when Jesus was there he just said go get some fish. And they caught fish. Very simple daily things. And yet they realized it was through the power of God. So to here with us today. Great power. What happens in this very place in this very room. Bread and wine will become Almighty God on this very altar. We are in the presence of Almighty God in the tabernacle. God, the King of the Universe, powerful, awesome God, humbles Himself before us.

That is a miracle, miracle, miracle. The greatest of miracles. The experience of God. And His holiness and His power in our presence this day. And we got to experience that power and the wonder. It is having a wonder in life. You know I am still a person who gets wondered by little stupid things. Yesterday, all day I was finding you know I put all this stuff together for Bread of Life and put all these cards together and made up. And I was sitting like a little kid yesterday because every time I would do something new with my new computer it had all these new things on it. It could do all this stuff for me. And I am sitting there saying thanks God! Oh this is great God. And I am sitting there. I am like a little kid. For little stupid things my computer could do that none of my other computers could do. Oh, look at this. Aw, it's great. I'm sitting there doing it like that to God. Aw, it's great God. Stupid things like computers. Well a hundred years that would have been a very big miracle to see something that simple as this little box giving me all these things and putting forth all this... If I would have had it ten years ago what I had today, I would have been jumping up and down like I was jumping up and down yesterday. You woke up this morning. It is a great thing. You could walk. You could see. Do you know how much it takes to see something? For the light to hit just right to go into your eyes to go backwards, turn upside down and turn it right side up in the back of your mind? It's a miracle. We are confronted with everything in life that is miraculous. If we allow it to be. If we stand in awe of all that God gives us. And it's the little things I told you before like next store Sister, Mother, over there, Emmanuel when she was a little girl her mother would say, "Isn't God good? He made the potatoes taste different than the pork chops. The pork chops taste different than the peas. He could have made everything taste the same." But God gives us these little gifts to show us that He loves us. But then also we are confronted with the awesomeness of God. People who don't believe in God have lost all wonder in their life. They have lost astonishment. They have lost the wonder for their very existence. But once we are confronted with this very wonder, what happens to all three of these people? Isaiah puts his head down and says woe to me. He falls down and he says woe to me. I am doomed. I am a man of unclean lips. You go to Peter. Peter falls down on his face and the feet of Jesus and he says depart from me Lord for I am a sinful man. Paul cries out the same thing. He says I am the least of the Apostles. I am nothing. That's what it is. And so we have to come to that reality too that in myself I am nothing. You know a couple of months ago when I was in with the Bishop. You know the Bishop is talking to me and talking about Bread of Life and what we are going to do and where we are going to go if we can. And he sat there and he says you know Larry you go build a church what if they move you and they put another priest there? And I said, Bishop, you have not got it yet, have you? I am nothing. And that is reality. You know Bread of Life is run by a lot more people than Fr. Larry. I just do the littlest bit here. You know it is everything else. And we got to realize that who we are. He looks at me and I look at him and I say, Bishop, I am nothing. That's it. You know when I go around to all the places I do, it's nothing. So what. You know we had this past week a great thing at Prep. We had governor, yea, Senator Santorum there. And here this man pro-life man, praise God, who sat there. Catholic man, praise God who sat there and talked about, you know twenty years ago, none of the kids knew, does anybody remember who the senator was? One of the senators of Pennsylvania was twenty years ago? And nobody could remember. But he says you know what? My kids will know who their dad is twenty years from now. My wife will know who her husband was. The most important thing I do is to be a dad and to be a husband. And he says and you know what? One day I am going to stand before God and He is not going to care that I was a Senator. I am going to stand before Him and I'll have to give an account of my life before God. And I thought, "Yes!! Yes!! You

got it!! You get it!! Yes! Yes! Yes! You realize that no matter what we do in life this means nothing. I got to stand before God and I was I a loving person? Was I a person who was filled with bringing others to God? Was it all about Him and not about me? See that is what it has got to be. My life cannot be about me.. It's got to be about Him. Because whenever I waste my life on me, look who I am. Look what I have done. Lord, leave me. I am a sinful person. And then when you do that and I do that, God will take you and me and lift us up say, now that you know who you are, I am going to do a great work with you. I am going to use you and you are going to do great things. And that is what He did with Isaiah. That is what He did with the Apostles. That's what He did with Paul. When they realized who they were and they realized the holiness and the power of God they could do anything together with God. What God commissions you and me to do is to work with Him. To be co-creators with Him. To be workers with Him knowing that it is all for Him. Cause here Paul would say in 1Corinthians chapter 15, at the end of it on page, verse 10, page 1247. But by the grace of God I am what I am. And this grace to me has not been ineffective. Indeed I have toiled harder than all the others. So what we got to do is we got to know who we are but we got to work with God. We got to do our part. We got to be toiling, working, with all that we are and what are we working for. The salvation of others. Is that what you and I are working for? Are we working for the salvation of other people? Are we knowing, cause you know Lord, I am not a good speaker. Lord, I can't I get embarrassed talking about other people to you. You know what I am nothing. But you are holy. So Lord I give you permission to use me and I will work and cooperate with your grace. For what? The fulfillment of the great commission. And what is the great commission? Go forth and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and Holy Spirit. That everyone of us here ...that He says I will make you fishers of men. And He is going to make you fishers of men and women too. He said to Isaiah go forth and preach. He told him to preach. He told Paul go and bring others to Me. And He says the same to you and me today. Go. Make disciples. Bring people to the knowledge of My love. Don't just sit there and go to Bread of Life. That is a waste. Go forth from here and bring forth others to the knowledge of My love. To the knowledge of my salvation. You and I will give an account of our lives someday before God. And He will ask us again as I have talked before where are your brothers and sisters? Did you bring anybody with you? Did you share My love with anybody? Did you toil with that reality? And it begins for those of you who are parents, with your children. Right there. Those of you who are in high school, it begins with your friends who you are in high school with everyday. Those of you who are at work, it begins with the people you work with everyday. Everybody, every place. God has put people into your lives so that you can tell them about Him. So we got to do it. You know today we have got people coming into our church because you told them about Him. But these people who are coming into our church today, whoa you think it is easy now. Wait! Because now your job is to go forth and to tell other people about Him. That all of us are called to be evangelists. You know that the number one thing that should make Bread of Life different than any place else, and really shouldn't be different they should all be doing this, is that everybody here should be an evangelist. Everybody here should know that you're commissioned from Almighty God, Himself, to go forth and to proclaim the gospel. It's not just Fr. Larry's job and don't put it off on him. It is not just Billy Graham's job. It's your job. God has commissioned you to go forth as He did Isaiah. As He did Peter, James and John. As He did Paul. Now today He does you. Are you willing to fill the great commission? You better be. May each of you know His live today and forever. Amen.