

February 7, 2016 Who Do You Trust Homily:

Brothers and sisters, over the years television game shows have been very popular with the viewing public. In particular, two shows come to mind: Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune. Both shows have enjoyed enormous success and continue to draw many viewers. Some of you may be of an age to remember a quiz show dating back to the late 1950's "*Who Do You Trust*", featuring the late Johnny Carson as emcee, who later achieved fame by hosting the "*Tonight Show*."

Appearing on each episode of "*Who Do You Trust*" were three couples, a male and a female, who were the featured contestants. Mr. Carson would inform the man of the category for the upcoming question. The contestant could choose to answer the question himself or defer to his partner. Did he trust himself or did he place his trust in his female partner, a total stranger. Who do you trust?

In today's gospel, Jesus calls his first disciples (Lk. 5:1-11). The evangelist, St. Luke informs us that the fisherman Simon Peter has been up all night and has caught nothing! What follows is Peter's confession of faith, of trust and of confidence. He says to Christ: "At your word, I will let down the nets" (Lk. 5:5) He trusts Jesus and is willing to once again "put out a short distance from the shore" (Lk. 5:3) even though it is daytime.

Recall another episode in which Peter's trust in Jesus is tested; it is the image of Peter, in the Gospel of Matthew, getting out of a boat and walking toward Jesus. The contrast is remarkable: first Peter walking towards new growth and trust then Peter sinking in fear. As one writer puts it, "The image of Jesus stretching out his hand to Peter across the sea conveys again Christ's longing to lead us into the uncharted waters of total trust".

How often do we hear the words "trust no one"? Today, many of us are suspicious of government officials, journalists, teachers, parents and even the clergy! Conspiracy theorists often warn us of those in authority who want to sabotage our freedoms. One popular bumper sticker reads. "Be paranoid... Trust No One!"

Now is the time to listen to what the Lord has to say, the time to entrust ourselves to Him and throw our nets out to the deep! Bear in mind that the signs and wonders Jesus worked aimed at strengthening the trust His disciples were to have in Him. Today, in the Holy Land, one can see a sign on the shore of Lake Galilee, quoting Peter's words in today's gospel; "At your word, I will let down the nets". The sign goes on to say: "The words and deeds of Jesus are not actions of the distant past. Jesus is still looking for men and women who are prepared to take risks at his word because they trust him utterly." Peter's trust in Jesus and the catch of fish that followed were rewarded not merely to inspire us but also to invite us to imitate Peter. At the end of the gospel, we are told that Peter followed Jesus on the strength of his word. (Lk. 5:11).

Trust in Christ is a gift of God! In closing let me share with you a remarkable story. At the end of the Second World War a French communist ended his life in a Nazi prison. With his own blood, he wrote on the wall of his cell the haunting words, "Jesus, you are the only one who did not deceive me!" Only at the end of his tormented life did the communist arrive at the inescapable conclusion that Jesus is trustworthy, and that He "is the Way, the Truth and the Life". (Jn. 14:6)

Amen!