

A Career Change/The Family Business

Intro. Very few of us are likely to have one job for most of our lives. With some occupations after twenty or thirty years there is enough time for another career. We are far more likely to have multiple jobs during our working life. I had three full time jobs before finding this one and none of them was as satisfying.

I. The brothers who were recruited by the Lord for ministry probably thought *they* would make a career of fishing. Their families likely worked in the fishing business for several generations. If they dreamed of some other life, the chances of it coming true were few. That changed the day the Lord invited them to follow him and become something he called “fishers of men.” Of course they couldn’t know

what that really meant, but evidently they were willing to trust the Lord for some reason. That reason was more emotional than rational, meaning they couldn’t have explained it to their fathers and co-workers. Imagine the fathers’ reactions. “You’re going where? To do *what*? With who?” What the Lord offered the brothers was not a job; it was a vocation. Most jobs have set hours and a headquarters location. This was not even working from home because there *was* no home. There were no sick days and only an occasional day off to visit family if they happened to be in Galilee. We are told in scripture that some disciples found the work to be too much and they went home. The core group of Apostles and disciples stayed with the Lord because they found something in him they didn’t have before: a new way of living that gave them

hope. They formed a community, no, a family that supported one another throughout their lives. That was enough for them and more than some ever had. That community still gathers to share the joys *and* the strains of being Christians today.

Concl. How do *we* explain the gut feeling we have felt about making a decision about our lives that seems risky? I can't *fully* explain what led me to be a priest because to this day I'm not totally sure. I *can* say it wasn't all my decision; similar to many of you regarding your vocations, there was a call. The brothers left one family business and entered a new family business. We are also part of that "family business," announcing that the kingdom of God is now. Along with Andrew, Simon, John and James, we discovered answering the call to follow the Lord is not always easy work. But the experience of

seeing miracles – small and large – in ourselves and others, can be enough to keep us answering God's call. The Second Vatican Council document, "The Church in the Modern World" and Pope Francis' letter on "Care for Our Common Home," are helpful in remembering "The kingdom of God is *just* as near today as on that day when Jesus came to Galilee preaching about it" [M. McGlone, *NCR*, 1/21/18].

