

Catching on

John 21.1-19

After Jesus has risen from the dead, Simon Peter and the disciples return to their fishing boats. From the shore, Jesus directs them to a miraculous catch of fish and then speaks to Simon Peter, telling him how he should go on to serve the church.

Now read **John 21.1-19** see p.2 for text.

A note on the passage

This passage is full of references to new and old patterns of living. The disciples have gone back to the way of life they know, but they are not successful until Jesus intervenes. Simon Peter is reminded by the charcoal fire and by Jesus' choice of words that he betrayed his friend, but Jesus offers something new, an important role in caring for his church. Jesus breaks the old patterns, offers new ones and invites us to follow him.

PATTERN PLAY



How good are you at identifying patterns? Jesus challenges us to look at the way we live and make alterations so that we follow the example he sets. Play mastermind online: <https://webgamesonline.com/mastermind/index.php> The small pointers given when you check at the end of each round show you how to adapt, just as Jesus can help us in our daily lives.



What patterns do you see in your life?



May Day (1 May) celebrates the first day of summer. When Jesus commissioned Peter, it marked the beginning of a new season in his life too. Use the May Day tradition of gathering wildflowers and green shoots to decorate your room or home, and think about how God can speak to us through the natural world. Arrange your flora to symbolise that you are embarking on a new season of listening out for God in the world.

Prayer Pattern

A pattern of prayer can be key to discerning what God is saying to us and the Psalms have always been a source of inspiration for Christians. This week, set aside time at the start and end of the day to pray, and begin each time with a Psalm. Use the same Psalm both in the morning and the evening, starting with Psalm 95 and working your way through to Psalm 101.

REFLECT

What are you really good at? What is your area of expertise? The disciples were fishermen, but when they listened to Jesus, who was a carpenter, they caught more fish than they thought possible. Spend some time in silent prayer, asking Jesus to show you new ways of living, even in areas where you feel you are the expert.



Create patterned wrapping paper.

Jesus doesn't require us to completely reinvent ourselves, but small, subtle changes can make a big difference. When you next give gifts, try wrapping them in homemade paper, which has a positive impact on the environment. Make potato stamps, cutting them into decorative shapes, and use them with ink pads or paint to create a pattern on brown parcel paper.

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

Simon Peter and the disciples were by the Sea of Galilee. Simon Peter said, 'I'm going fishing,' and they all decided to go. They worked all night but didn't catch a single fish.

Just after dawn, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples didn't know it was him. 'Cast your nets to the other side of the boat, and you will find some,' he said. They did so and then they couldn't haul in the net, it was too heavy with fish!

John said to Simon Peter in delight, 'It is the Lord!'

Simon Peter threw on his clothes and jumped straight into the water, while the others followed in the boat, dragging the net full of fish.

On the beach they saw a charcoal fire, with fish cooking on it, and bread. Jesus said, 'Bring some of the fish you've just caught.' So Simon Peter hauled the net, containing 153 large fish, ashore. The net didn't even tear! Jesus beckoned to them: 'Come and have breakfast,' he said.



None of the disciples dared ask him who he was, because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, and took the bread and gave it to them, then the fish. This was the third time the risen Jesus had appeared to the disciples.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, do you love me more than the others?'

'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.'

'Feed my lambs,' Jesus replied. Then Jesus asked him again, 'Simon, do you love me?'

'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.'

'Tend my sheep,' said Jesus. A third time, Jesus asked him, 'Simon, do you love me?'

Peter felt a bit hurt because Jesus had asked him three times. So he said, 'Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you.'

'Feed my sheep,' said Jesus. 'I tell you,' he continued, 'when you were young you went where you wanted to, but when you grow old, someone will take you where you don't want to go.' Jesus was hinting at Peter's death, which would glorify God. After this, Jesus said simply, 'Follow me.'

John 21.1-19

Did you know?

- The story starts after Jesus has risen, but his disciples are back at what they know best – fishing.

- Peter is upset that Jesus asked if he loved him three times because that is the same number of times he denied knowing Jesus.

John 21.1-19 (NRSV)

After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.'

He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish.

That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off. When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.' So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish,

a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'