

# Dear Padre,

**While on vacation, I attended Mass at a church where many people left right after Communion. Why would they do this?**

Canon law says the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass on Sundays and other holy days. We are expected to attend the entire Mass.

A misunderstanding of this law may be traced to a pre-Vatican II teaching. Some theologians taught that the Mass had three main parts: offertory, consecration, and Communion. Some people reasoned that their obligation would be fulfilled by attending only those parts of the Mass. They felt justified in coming late and leaving early.

This changed with the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). The Mass is divided into four sections (introductory rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, concluding rite), and Christ is present throughout the Mass. Attending Mass means being there from the processional hymn through the recessional hymn.

Some people have valid reasons for leaving Mass early, such as feeling ill or taking a crying child from church. Perhaps they are traveling and need to get to the airport on time. Still, I also wonder why there is a great exodus before the Mass has ended in some churches. In my opinion, people who are in the habit of leaving early should reconsider that practice. ●



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Fr. Victor Karls, CSSR / DearPadre.org

## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
January 22 <i>Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children</i> 2 Sm 5:1–7, 10 Mk 3:22–30	January 23 <i>Weekday</i> 2 Sm 6:12b–15, 17–19 Mk 3:31–35	January 24 <i>St. Francis de Sales, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</i> 2 Sm 7:4–17 Mk 4:1–20	January 25 <i>Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle</i> Acts 22:3–16 or Acts 9:1–22 Mk 16:15–18	January 26 <i>Sts. Timothy and Titus, Bishops</i> 2 Tm 1:1–8 or Ti 1:1–5 Mk 4:26–34	January 27 <i>Weekday</i> 2 Sm 12:1–7a, 10–17 Mk 4:35–41	January 28 <i>Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i> Dt 18:15–20 1 Cor 7:32–35 Mk 1:21–28



## A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

**Brothers and sisters, before the Lord's call, which can reach us in a thousand ways—through others, happy or sad events—our attitude at times might be rejection. But God's call is always love: we have to try to discover the love behind each call, and it should be responded to only with love.**

ANGELUS, ROME, JANUARY 17, 2021

Pope Francis meets with "Phone Friend" volunteers of the Samaritans Italy in 2017. © L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO



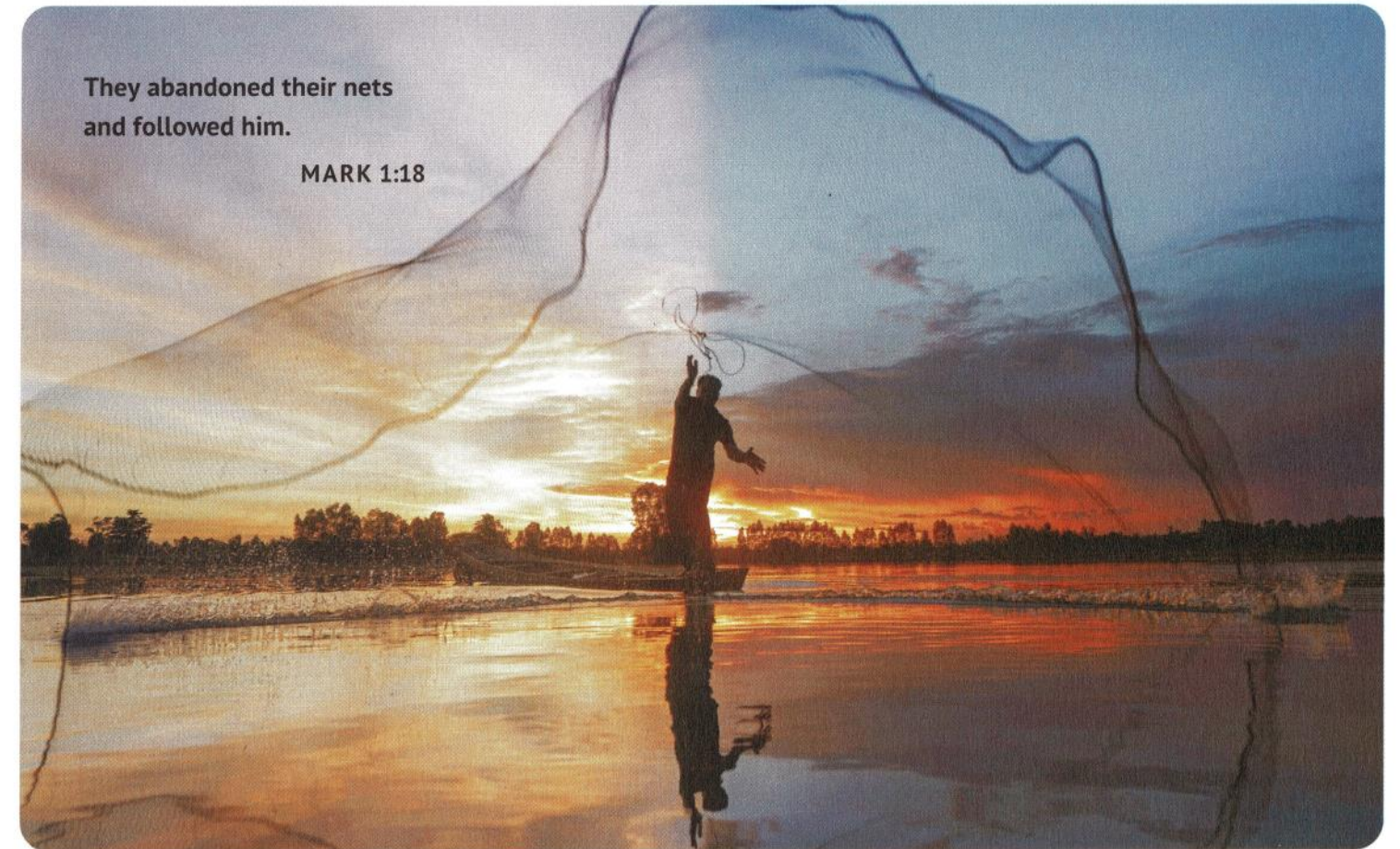
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# Our Parish COMMUNITY

January 21, 2024

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Jonah 3:1–5, 10 / 1 Corinthians 7:29–31 / Mark 1:14–20



They abandoned their nets and followed him.

MARK 1:18

## A New World Is Coming

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**O**ur lives are filled with calls of one kind or another. Phone calls, text messages, teachers who call on us in class, those who call us for supper, people behind a counter who call out, "Next!" And, sooner or later, death will call each of us.

Jonah was once called to go to Nineveh, and the people of Nineveh were called to repent and change their lives. Simon and Andrew, John and James were called to follow Jesus. And today God calls each of us, but it is never easy to sort out what it is we are called to do.

Saint Paul took pains to tell us that "the world in its present form is passing away" (1 Corinthians 7:31). That being true, then God's call is always into a new way of life, which seems to imply leaving something behind, not unlike the four followers in Sunday's Gospel leaving their fishing nets and their father Zebedee in his boat.

The world that is passing away may be childhood, or productivity as we age. The new world may require confronting addiction and leaving a life of what we thought we couldn't live without. Or, like the people of Nineveh who were called to repent, it might be a call for our nation to confront our failure to engage in dialogue about and find solutions to injustice in its many forms at home and abroad. Who knows what God's new world will be? ●

### Reflect

**To what is God calling you, your community, our nation?**

