



WAY OF DISCIPLESHIP

An imaginative reflection based on John 21 1-14

You have been out on the water all night with your friends. It felt good to get back to fishing, something you haven't done much for quite some time. Once you decided to follow the teacher, other things in your life receded.

And then, all that happened recently—you are still trying to understand it. Scenes of Jesus' trials and death still haunt you, even though you know he has risen from the grave. And, even though you have seen his resurrected self, he is not with you all the time. Something fundamental has changed. He has gone to another way of being, and you're still here.

No surprise that it was bad night for fishing. You all tried to go back to the way things used to be. But of course, that was impossible. You were fishing, but you were talking, too. Just being out on the water brought back those vivid memories—Jesus teaching from the boat, the lakeshore crowded with people listening to him, seeking him, needing him. Jesus calming the storm that time you all knew you would drown. Jesus walking across the surface of the lake in the dead of night.

In fact, everything you do now has some Jesus memory connected to it. But still, it's not the same as having him right here, right now. It's not so unusual for someone to cook breakfast on the shore. Nothing better than fish cooked on spit—a fish pulled from the water just moments before. So as you bring the boat closer to shore, you don't pay much attention to the man there by the little fire.

The man calls to you: "Children, you have no fish, have you?" He has noticed that the boat rides high in the water—no weighty catch.

"No," you answer.

"Cast the net to the right side of the boat; then you will catch some."

You have heard something like this before.

What does it feel like to recognize the voice but not be able to place it?

The last time someone told you where to cast your nets; there was great miracle.

What is spinning through your mind right now?

You throw the nets off the right side of the boat. Within moments, the nets are full. You look toward the man on the beach. He looks back at you.

What look is on his face? Is he smiling? Is he serious?

It doesn't take long, even with the overload of fish, to get to the shore and make your way up to the little fire. The man speaks again: "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." Of course, by now you know it is Jesus. You approach him and the fire. Everything about the morning is so clear, so palpable.

What does the air feel like? What scents are in the breeze? Is it warm or cold?

What does the sandy earth feel like as you walk closer and closer to that fire?

You hand Jesus several fish. He reaches to take them. Those are real, flesh-and-blood hands. You notice, though, the scars on his wrists, clear marks where the spikes had gone all the way through. Then you dare to look up at his face.

What does his face look like on this early morning?

What emotions do you read in his eyes?

You watch the body, once dead and damaged, go through these ordinary motions of putting the fish on spit and positioning it above the flames. You see the man squatting there in the sand, one knee on the ground, tending the fire as if this were typical kind of thing to do on typical day.

What does it feel like to be just inches from this mysterious, marvellous human, who was dead but now lives?

What is the first thing you say?

What does Jesus say in response?

Taken from www.ignatianspirituality.com

