

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time: January 24, 2021**

St. Vincent de Paul Church, Baltimore

#### Gospel Reflection

“The reign of God is at hand.” How can that be true, having been said thousands of years ago? Doesn’t “at hand” mean soon? What Mark was actually trying to tell us is that Jesus was the beginning of God’s reign and the fulfillment of His promise to his people. Mark doesn’t focus much on Jesus’ teaching, but on his person, his life, his example. His words in this gospel are simple, “Come follow me.”

Did the apostles he called know of Jesus before their call? Had they heard about Him? All we know for sure is that they dropped everything and accepted Jesus’ call to follow Him. I wonder if I would have done the same.

Becoming a follower of Jesus includes the need to repent. In her reflection on today’s gospel, Sr. Mary M. McGlone says that the Greek word for repent is *metanoia* and means more than being sorry. She describes it as being closer to "Let your mind be blown away by unimagined possibilities!"

That certainly fits with what it must have been like for the disciples who chose to follow Jesus. Their lives were certainly transformed in ways they probably never anticipated. We also know, in hindsight, that the disciples were not immediately transformed and their time with Jesus was fraught with doubt and betrayal. They had many opportunities for being sorry.

Yet they were the ones that Jesus ended up commissioning to lead his church and spread the good news. That gives me hope that my life does not need to be perfect to continue Jesus’ mission, nor does the church need to be perfect.

Maybe we just need to open our minds to those unimagined possibilities.

*Pat Ball*