

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Sometimes things that appear to be small can in fact be great things. A single verse from the Bible can move us to action. A quote from a prophet can echo in our minds. Even something that appears to be as small (perhaps even as trivial) as a comic strip, can stir our thoughts.

Recently, I mentioned the comic strip, *Mutts*, by Patrick McDonnell, in a sermon and letter. This morning, I mention it again after seeing a new entry from last Friday (January 22, 2021, *La Crosse Tribune*). The single frame is of Mooch the cat, giving a dish of food to a deer. The verse is a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr., "If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way."

This message gave me pause, because my sermon today speaks of four of the disciples-- Simon, Andrew, James and John, being called by Jesus. All four are fishermen, who are everyday persons. Jesus says, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people" (Mark 1:15, NRSV).

We, too, are called to serve Jesus, albeit in different ways than the first disciples. Yet, each of us is important in God's kingdom. Each person, no matter how small they may think their influence may be, serves God through their own spiritual gifts and unique skills.

The Reformation eliminated those distinctions between clergy and lay by affirming that God calls everybody. The word for this call to everyone is "vocation," from Latin *vocatio*, "calling." Everyone has a station in life, probably several stations in how society functions, and this "vocation." Every job that works to build up and maintain society is a calling--teacher, insurance salesman, car mechanic, politician, etc. We also have callings within family structures--mother, father, aunt, uncle, child, etc. We serve God in these family callings as well. (Michael Rogness, "Working Preacher")

At times, perhaps, the thought of being called to be God's disciple may be overwhelming. Yet, the quote from Reverend Dr. King reminds us, "If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way." The call to discipleship is different for each one of us. Some may wonder how to heed the words, "Follow me...," because they are comparing themselves to others with more power or prestige. But, God calls us, and the Holy Spirit speaks to us, as we use our own unique spiritual gifts to the glory of God. Each of us is to do what we can to further God's kingdom, even if it may appear to be small. For small things can be done in great ways. And when we all work together, even small things we do in great ways, can lead to greater and greater things for God's kingdom. Thanks be to God.

Peace,

Pastor Cathy

