

Allowing for this gospel story, perhaps, to be from a separate tradition to other post-resurrectional stories of Jesus, could it not also be seen as a call to the wandering disciples to return once more to Jerusalem and begin their lives of witness from Jerusalem to the world, even though Jesus has ordered them first to Galilee? For, like the two disciples at Emmaus, wandering home to more familiar territory, here the Galilean disciples have returned to what they know they do well, in a place they know well. They've gone fishing – but the better fisherman is Jesus. For he not only, with delicious irony as a landlubber, tells them where the fish are, but entices them to share in a breakfast of bread and 'a charcoal fire with fish' already 'cooking on it' – fish already provided by himself. He is truly Lord of the situation and of their hearts, feeding both their bodies and their souls – a eucharist in word and deed. And this eucharistic presence will be their leitmotif as they in turn go back to Jerusalem and from there, to the world, witnessing to the presence of the Risen One, in words and deeds, such as the healing of the man born lame. Such 'kindness' completely confounds the authorities of the day – for their authority lies, not in kindness or good deeds but, under the cloak of constantly reiterated power. God's power and presence is much more immediate than that. When Jesus calls to his disciples from the shore, he uses the word *paidion*, a diminutive or caritative, meaning 'child' or 'little one', and expressing a relationship of kinship or family. 'Friends' is a good enough translation but we lose the sense that Jesus is calling them, not only back to mission, but to a work made possible only because he has died for them as a 'next of kin'.

Br John Mayhead
Monastery of Christ Our Saviour