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The whole of biblical religion begins with the call to listen. To listen is to be blessed and to become a blessing for others. So too each day the Christian disciple is called to listen to the words of Jesus.

In today’s Gospel, Peter recognises that, however strange they may be, Jesus’ words are “the words of eternal life”. Faith is the name of the recognition to which Peter comes. Once faith opens their eyes to that truth, the disciples come to knowledge; they know that the words of Jesus, however strange, are utterly true and trustworthy. Therefore, they stay with him and follow him wherever he leads.

The Annual Catholic Campaign is all about listening to the words of Jesus, “the Holy One of God”, trusting what we hear and following where he leads – becoming more and more like the Master as we go, until we become so like him that people see Jesus in us. It is to be blessed and to become a blessing in turn.

I ask you today to support the Annual Catholic Campaign in this strange landscape through which we are passing where we’re all feeling the pinch in one way or another. The Campaign is one way of focusing on what really matters, which in the end means focusing on Jesus and listening to the strange and wonderful words he speaks – not just hearing but listening. His are “the words of eternal life”, the words of him who says, “Come you blessed of my Father: inherit the Kingdom prepared for you (Matt 25:34), for…as long as you did this to one of these, the least of my brothers and sisters, you did it to me” (Matt 25:40). We focus on the least in order to focus on Jesus and follow him – because “to whom else can we go?” He is the only one who can lead us home.