

Homily of Second Sunday in Ordinary Time Year, B 2021

1 Samuel 3:3-10, 19; Psalm 40, 2, 4, 7-10; 1 Corinthians 6:13-15, 17-20; John 1:35-42

The first reading tells us the story of the call of young Samuel. The second reading reminds us of the essence of holiness of life. The Gospel is about the call of three disciples of Jesus. It is not a mere coincidence that the theme of our celebration and reflection, after the Christmas Season, is God's call to us to discipleship. We received so much from the Advent and Christmas Seasons. Now, in the Ordinary Time of the Church's calendar, is the time to put the graces we received during the Advent and Christmas Seasons into action.

In the first reading, we see that God did not give up calling Samuel until Samuel answered him. In the same way, God does not give up on us. He continues to send his Spirit to minister to our hearts. We pray for the grace to respond positively to God's call as Samuel did. Samuel, finally, replied, "Speak, your servant is listening." The reading concludes, "Samuel grew up, and the Lord was with him, not permitting any word of his to be without effect." When we respond positively to God's call, we will receive the same blessing Samuel received. We will grow in the Lord; and the Lord will be with us; and will not permit any word of ours to be without effect. What an intimate relationship with God!

The second reading calls us to holiness of life. In the reading, St. Paul reminds us that our bodies are members of Christ and temples of the Holy Spirit, which have been purchased at a price. This is the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. St. Paul invites us to refrain from sins of the flesh but glorify God in our bodies. In 1 Corinthians 3:23, St. Paul reminds us, "You are of Christ, and Christ is of God." This union with Christ is broken when union with a human being through fornication is committed. By the act of fornication, the union becomes with the two fornicators and no longer with Christ (1 Corinthians 6:16). If we are no longer in union with Christ, it means we are no longer temples of the Holy Spirit. Such a broken relationship with God is what St. Paul challenges us to avoid.

The sequence of events in the Gospel of today is very striking. John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb of God to Andrew and another disciple of his. The two left John and became disciples of Jesus. Later, Andrew "found his own brother, Simon, and told him, 'We have found the Messiah.' ... Then he brought him to Jesus." John the Baptist and Andrew teach us to show Jesus to others and bring them to Jesus. We can do this by our words and actions.

I imagine that Simon must have, proudly, attributed what he became - the leader of the apostles and the first pope - to his brother, Andrew, who took him to Jesus. Won't it be great if someone attributes his or her blessings to your help? There are instances where people deny help to those in need in order to prevent their success. The Gospel reading shows us that John was not afraid to lose his two disciples, and so was not reluctant to show Jesus to them. John declared, "He must increase; I must decrease" (John 3:30). And, Andrew eagerly found his brother and brought him to Jesus; for him to have a share of the treasure (Messiah) he had discovered.

Someone writes:

*"A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.
When we give of ourselves, nothing is truly lost.
When one candle lights another, its light is not diminished.
In fact, the light given off together is greater than the light of one."*

A candle diminishes and disappears as it burns. That is how our life is. Every day, we diminish like a burning candle. It's only a matter of time, we will disappear, and our light goes out. So, let us pass on our light and light up other human candles before we disappear and our light goes out.

To conclude, as God calls us, many other voices from the world and the Evil One call us too. The voices from the world and the Evil One are usually voices of discouragement. These voices discourage us from hearing God or listening to him and answering him. We pray for the grace to hear God's call and the grace to respond like Samuel, "Speak, your servant is listening."

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