

Homily of Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

The first reading gives us the story of the call of young Samuel. The second reading calls each of us to holiness. 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 action. We received so much from the Advent and Christmas Seasons. We are, now, in the Ordinary Time of the Church's calendar. The Ordinary Time is the time to put the graces we received during the Advent and Christmas Seasons into action.

We will examine God's call to action in four levels:

First -- by our Baptism we are called to be members of the Church. We are called to defend our faith and belief. In good times and in bad times, we are to show that we are proud Catholics and proud members of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic family.

Second -- by our Confirmation we are called to amplify our membership and discipleship. By the Sacrament of Confirmation we accept to be filled and led by the Holy Spirit to witness Jesus Christ. The second reading calls us temples of the Holy Spirit.

Third -- by being members of the Church we are called to holiness. We are called to do good and avoid sin. We are called to live and move and have being in God, in order to be with him in eternity.

Four -- God, further, calls us to his vineyard in various vocations, states of life, ministries and talents. God has blessed each one of us with either a vocation, or a state of life, or a ministry or talents to serve him, the Church, and humanity.

In the first reading, God kept calling Samuel until Samuel answered. In the same way, God has been calling some of us to do something. It is our prayer that many will respond positively to God's call. It is our prayer that, in this 2018, it is not only saying, "Speak, your servant is listening," but "Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will." By this, we rise from being hearers of the Word to doers of the Word (James 1:22).

As God is calling us, many other voices from the world and the evil one are calling us too, distracting us from hearing God and answering him. The voices from the world and the evil one are usually very loud and compelling; while the voice of God is usually soft and gentle. Profound silence is needed to hear the voice of God. We are invited to solitude and prayer. Learn to put

away every noise and distraction, and say, "Speak, your servant is listening." The Lord says through the psalmist, "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 40:10). The Lord says through Prophet Isaiah, "In quiet and trust shall be your strength" (Isaiah 30:15).

We read in the Gospel, "Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus. He first found his own brother Simon and told him, 'We have found the Messiah.'... Then he brought him to Jesus." Andrew teaches us how to lead others to Jesus by encouraging someone to return to Church; by not spreading false and discouraging news; by being positive; by visiting the sick – taking communion to them, and encouraging them; by sharing the word of God or prayer with someone.

Andrew was an instrument of blessing to Simon. Can you be an instrument of blessing to someone in 2018? Simon must have, proudly, attributed what he became – the leader of the apostles and the first pope – to his brother who took him to Jesus. Won't it be great if someone attributes his or her blessings to your help?

Fr. Martin Eke, MSP