

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME — B

READING I 1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19

READING II 1 Cor 6:13b-15a, 17-20

GOSPEL Jn 1:35-42

This passage, a part of the Deuteronomistic history literature, is a prophetic narrative call. In it, Samuel's authority is established through the passing of power from Eli to Samuel. While sleeping in the shrine at Shiloh, Samuel receives a revelation from the Lord that commissions him as a prophet. The repetition of Samuel going to Eli builds tension and stresses the reality of Samuel's experience. Not knowing the Lord indicates, although not yet established, the unique relationship Samuel would enjoy. Eli, at the third encounter, realizes that the Lord was speaking to Samuel. He informs him of the proper response. The second to last verse shows that the Lord actually comes to the young prophet and stands beside him. Samuel relates the downfall of his family to Eli. The author notes that Samuel continues to enjoy the Lord's presence. As a result, all his words were effective.

In the second reading, written around the spring of 57 A.D., Paul deals with the problem of casual sexual relations with prostitutes. In their view, the Corinthians maintained that the body had no moral value because it suffers destruction at death. For them, since only motive and intention determined sinfulness, all sin lay outside the body. Paul refutes this position by insisting on the impact of Christ's resurrection for all believers. Consequently, the body is important. To frustrate creation, that is, the permanent union of husband and wife, by casual intercourse with prostitutes is a sin against one's own body. Paul then adds that the bodies of Christians are the continuation of Jesus' saving mission. Christians enjoy a spiritual allegiance to Christ and are committed to his service. The Holy Spirit enables them to carry out this work of service. Indeed, the community, "your body," is the Spirit's dwelling place. Only by belonging to this community are Christians made capable of glorifying God. Community and casual intercourse with prostitutes do not go together.

The Gospel account shows John's call of the first disciples. In it, the Baptist's disciples become Jesus' disciples. The use of the verb "to follow" underlines the dedication of the disciple. Taking the initiative, Jesus explores the object of their quest. The object is God. The verb "to stay" suggests a permanent, not temporary, commitment. In John, the verbs "to come" and "to see" are often linked with the process of coming to faith. John uses the motif of Lady Wisdom, who makes her rounds, seeking those who are worthy of her (Prv 1:20-28). To find Wisdom is to find life (Prv 8:35).

The stay with Jesus leads Andrew and Simon to a deeper insight as to who Jesus really

is. Andrew, when speaking with his brother, refers to Jesus as the Messiah. Unlike Mt. 16 which relates Peter's name change (and destiny) much later in Jesus' ministry, John places the scene at the very beginning. John merely states that the basis for the change is Jesus' looking at Peter (v 42). Peter thus begins the process of an ever-deeper realization of who Jesus actually is.

Dedicated disciples embrace Jesus' mission. We perform our daily chores but only occasionally relate them to our God. We interact with other people every day but rarely pay heed to God's presence in them. We go to church on Sunday but cease to be aware of God's presence in the liturgy of daily life. Yet, disciples embrace Jesus' mission.

The call of Samuel is a study in an ever-greater awareness of God's presence. Initially Samuel does not know the Lord all that intimately. Through Eli's advice he learns to make a proper response. From that point on Samuel grows in the awareness of God and so discharges his office. The people perceive this awareness and recognize Samuel as the Lord's prophet (1 Sm 3:20). In the case of Samuel, service means to be aware of God in his life and so provide for others. Dedicated disciples embrace Jesus' mission.

The Gospel of John speaks to the human quest for God. In it the question of "looking for" then leads to them "staying." The result of Andrew's stay with Jesus makes him aware of Jesus' stature as Messiah. In turn, this awareness becomes contagious and leads to service. Andrew then, must search out Peter to bring him to Jesus. In John's Gospel discipleship means becoming ever more conscious of the reality of Jesus' presence. This awareness leads to living for others. In John, dedicated disciples embrace Jesus' mission.

Husbands and wives who seek to uncover the image of God in each other by serving are aware. Workers, both married and single, who see their job opportunities as faith opportunities for others, are aware. Leaders, who see their positions as bases of operations for aiding the poor and neglected, are with it. The sick and the dying, who reveal God's patience and joy, are with the program. These and all such people attest that dedicated disciples embrace Jesus' mission.

Eucharist focuses on Jesus' awareness of his Father's mission for him. Eucharist thus deals with the presence of Jesus in terms of service to the community. Eucharist urges the worshipping community to liturgize in all the other moments of life by uncovering the presence of Jesus in others. Eucharist, too, insists that dedicated disciples embrace Jesus' mission.