

## SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

January 14, 2018 Cycle B

**Opening prayer:** *Good and gracious God, thank you for gathering us together to share life and listen to your holy Word. Today you speak on how you call out to us in the events and encounters of daily life. May we discern your call to us and respond with generosity and obedience. We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Sharing life:** How did you experience God's presence and activity in your life last week? [If this question is a challenge for you, stay with it, for it will push us to be *more attentive* to God's presence and activity in our lives.]

**Ordinary Time:** This week we begin the Sundays in Ordinary Time. The 34 Sundays of Ordinary Time are wrapped around the two major seasons: Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter. Ordinary Time does not mean unimportant time because *every day* is a day the Lord has made. Yet, in another sense, Ordinary Time is ordinary in that it does not focus primarily on the major events in Christ's life. We might say Ordinary Time developed not so much for what it is, but for what it is not. It is not Advent, Christmas, Lent or Easter Time. We should have a special feeling for Ordinary Time because our lives are spent doing ordinary things such as working, eating, paying bills, shopping, driving, etc.

**Facilitator reads focus statement:** The first and third readings focus on a central theme in Scripture, namely, God's *call* and our *response*. Also, in both of these readings, people are being introduced to God and Jesus. They have a *personal experience* or encounter with God or Jesus. In the second reading, Paul reminds the Corinthians that because their lives belong to Christ through baptism, their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and cannot be used to engage in sexual promiscuity.

Consider reading the commentary before or after each Scripture reading.

### FIRST READING: 1Samuel 3:3b-10, 19

In this beautiful call-response story, Patricia Sanchez notes *six* dimensions of the call-response dynamic. *First*, Samuel does not recognize God's call, which illustrates the fact that calls from God are not always immediately discernible. *Second*, the repetitiveness of God's calling assures us that God does not easily quit on us. He keeps calling. *Third*, the setting of God's call to Samuel (at night while he slept in the temple sacristy) reminds us that God's call to us can come at any time or place or during any human activity. *Fourth*, the fact that Samuel resorts to his mentor Eli for help suggests that we often may need help from other experienced pilgrims to discern God's call. *Fifth*, the description of Samuel's growing to maturity in the presence of God underscores the power of grace to sustain whoever responds to God's call. *Sixth*, the effectiveness of Samuel's ministry (whereby the Lord did not allow any word of his to be without effect [v.19]) reassures those called that active cooperation with God can yield astounding results.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM 40

The response of the true disciple is an unqualified acceptance of God's will: "*Here I am, Lord. I come to do your will.*"

### SECOND READING: 1Corinthians 6:13-15, 17-20

During the first six Sundays of Ordinary Time, the second reading is from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. In his letter, Paul addresses the question of how to live as faithful disciples in a pagan world. Sexual promiscuity is one of the problems Paul encounters in the port town of Corinth. Some Corinthian Christians believe that their bodies, like all mortal things, will pass away and they can therefore do anything they want, e.g., engaging in unrestrained eating, drinking, sexual activity, etc. Paul thinks otherwise. He uses a striking parallel, reminding them that in baptism, our body (and spirit) is given to Christ; hence, it belongs to Christ. Because our body belongs to Christ, it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. For that reason, it is wrong and sinful for anyone bound by Christian marriage to give his/her body to another outside that sacred bond—which mirrors Christ's love for his Church.

## GOSPEL: John 1:35-42

Just as Eli in today's first reading introduced Samuel to the Lord, John the Baptist, in this Gospel, introduces two of his disciples to Jesus (which underlines John's subordinate role). John's ministry is (as is ours) to introduce others to Christ. When the two disciples begin to follow Jesus, he asks them: "What are you looking for?"—or, simply put, "What does your heart seek?" They answer with a question of their own: "Rabbi, where do you live?" Jesus replies: "Come and see." So they go off to have a long chat (a mini-retreat) with Jesus. During their "stay" with him, the eyes of the two disciples are opened to his true identity. "Seeing" and "staying" are key terms in John's Gospel. The one whose *eyes are opened* to who Jesus truly is, is invited to come and *stay* with Jesus, to come and share Jesus' relationship with his Father. It is an introduction into a life of discipleship, which leads one into "*staying*" with the Blessed Trinity.

Having had their eyes opened, one of the two disciples, Andrew, seeks out his brother, Simon, and introduces him to Jesus. Jesus immediately changes Simon's name to *Cephas*, meaning "rock." Henceforth, Peter will have a key and central role in the new community of believers.

## FAITH-SHARING QUESTIONS

1. What verse spoke to you most in the readings? Why?
2. The young Samuel needed Eli to help him recognize the voice of the Lord. Who or what has helped you to be a hearer of God's Word?
3. In the second reading, Paul focuses on sexual promiscuity occurring in Corinth, an issue that is still a big problem in our day. Besides condemning it, how should the Church address this issue?
4. How would you respond if Jesus were to ask you, "What are you looking for?"
5. How easy or hard is it for you to introduce others to Christ or to share your faith?
6. What is Jesus saying to you in the gospel about how a Christian disciple should act?

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Name one way you can act on today's readings. Suggestion: Try to be more aware of how God might be calling you in the events and encounters of daily life.

## CONCLUDE WITH PRAYERS OF PETITION AND INTERCESSION

Pray especially that each of us hear and respond to God's call and that young people take seriously the Church's teaching on sexual morality.

### Save the Date!!

**Saturday, March 10, 2018**

**Annual Day of Reflection**

by the Space Coast Alliance of  
Small Christian Communities with  
Father Dave Pivonka, TOR,  
The Wild Goose Is Loose!