

2nd Sunday per Annum - B
I Samuel 3:3b-10, 19;
I Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20;
John 1:35-42
Little Flower - 1/18/15

My Brothers and Sisters,

In today's Gospel, John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus the Lamb of God. Hearing this, two of John's disciples followed Jesus. When Jesus asked them what they were looking for, they asked him where he was staying.

In a recent homily, I mentioned that the quest for God is implanted in human nature. As St. Augustine wrote, "My heart will never rest until it rests in you, O Lord."¹ Consciously or unconsciously, we spend our whole life seeking God. Our search for God is at the heart of our search for meaning. In reality, all of us spend our whole lives trying to make sense of our lives. Why were those disciples following John? Why did they then follow Jesus? Consciously or unconsciously, John's disciples were searching for God, searching for the ultimate meaning of their lives.

As Christians, we believe that we only find the true meaning of our lives, we only find God, if we find Jesus. When they asked where Jesus was staying, Jesus' response to them was a very gentle invitation. He simply said, "*Come, and you will see.*"

What I found most interesting was the disciples' question to Jesus: "*Where are you staying?*" What a strange question! Whenever you visit someone's home, you typically get a deeper insight into a person than if you always see them in a more public setting. For example, if you really want to get insight into a teenager, check out his or her bedroom. In other words, the disciples wanted to have an intimate visit with Jesus.

If we want to have an intimate experience of Jesus, the first thing we have to do is spend quality time with him. We have to have intimate conversation with him in prayer. We have to spend time with him by reading the Gospels. We cannot have a more intimate experience with Jesus than by receiving the sacraments, our privileged encounters with Jesus. Finally, we have to experience Jesus as he identifies himself with others, especially the most vulnerable.

In today's first reading, we hear the story of God's call to Samuel. Three times Samuel mistook God's call for Eli's call. Finally, Eli tells Samuel that if he was called again, he should respond, "*Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.*" Like Samuel, we often do not recognize the voice of God and, therefore, do not respond. God speaks to us in our heart of hearts. God speaks to us through his Word. God speaks to us through the Church. God speaks to us through others. One of my favorite Old Testament passages is the passage in I Kings where God reveals himself to Elijah not in the strong and heavy wind, not in the earthquake, and not in the fire, but in the tiny whispering sound. If we want to hear the voice of God, we have to listen very attentively.

My brothers and sisters, in today's second reading, St. Paul reminds us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, we can abuse our bodies in so many ways: negative judgments, alcohol, drugs, smoking, sex, overeating, under-eating, inactivity, overwork, and reckless behavior. Our bodies and the bodies of the others should be cherished and respected. We should strive to see and love ourselves and others as God sees and loves us and them. In God's eyes, all of us are beautiful and of infinite value. As the author of Sirach wrote, "*How beautiful are all his works!*" [42:22].

¹St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 1, Chapter 1.