

2nd Sunday per Annum - B
1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19;
I Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20;
John 1:35-42
Little Flower - 1/17/21

My Brothers and Sisters,

The First Book of Samuel is one of the historical books of the Old Testament. These books often offer us very practical life lessons. The first thing we notice is that the first three times God called Samuel, Samuel thought Eli was calling. Initially even Eli did not recognize that it was God calling Samuel.

Although Samuel was sleeping in the temple where the ark of God was, we are told that “*Samuel was not familiar with the Lord because the Lord had not revealed anything to him as yet.*” Although God has revealed Himself to us in Christ and most of us have been raised in the Catholic Church or another Christian Church, we might ask ourselves how familiar we are with the Lord. Samuel was not familiar with the Lord because God had not revealed Himself to him. If we are not familiar with the Lord, perhaps it is because we have not done very much to listen to the Lord or to develop a personal relationship with Him.

Unfortunately, in today’s culture we are distracted by the multitude of voices calling out to us or we confuse our own voice with God’s voice. Therefore, 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 sacraments. God speaks to us through the Church. God speaks to us through others. However, if we want to hear the voice of God, we have to listen.

Like Samuel, God calls each of us by name. Like Samuel, each of us has a special role to play in God’s plan of salvation. Therefore, it is important that like Samuel, we respond, “*Speak, for your servant is listening.*” Today many young people struggle to discern their vocation in life because they have so many choices. Several years ago, a priest suggested that instead of asking what do I want to do with my life, they might begin by asking what does God want me to do with my life. If they seriously ask that question, they will be freed from a lot of the burden of answering the question.

In today’s Gospel, we hear the vocation story of Peter and Andrew. When John the Baptist dramatically points out Jesus, Andrew and another of John’s disciples then followed Jesus. Jesus asks them, “*What are you looking for?*” They respond, “*Where are you staying?*” Jesus then invites them to come and see. They went, saw where he was staying, and spent the day with him.

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. What did Andrew do when he found Jesus? He went and found Simon Peter, his brother, and brought him to Jesus.

My brothers and sisters, at least partially because of all of our COVID restrictions, the parish recently purchased a one-year subscription to Formed for the entire parish. We might describe Formed as Netflix for Catholics. This week’s bulletin contains a flyer explaining how to sign up online. Formed offers thousands of books, audio talks, movies, documentaries, and studies to help us to become familiar with Christ as Samuel became familiar with God and Andrew became familiar with Jesus. Our *Invite* Commission will host an online parish faith event during Lent. However, to participate, you first need to register. Please register this week and begin exploring and using what Formed has to offer.