

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

[Reading I: 1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19](#)

[Responsorial Psalm 140:2,4,7-8, 8-9, 10](#)

[Reading II: 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20](#)

[Gospel: John 1:35-42](#)

Readings may be found on the US Bishop's website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/011424.cfm>



Ordinary time is not just plain old Sundays; instead, the focus calls us to be attentive to the ordinary ways that God works in our lives. During Advent and Christmas, we prayed and reflected upon the extraordinary way that God worked in human history. Now, we return our attention to God's invitations to us each day in our studies, relationships with family and friends, work, and civic lives.

The first reading comes from the First Book of Samuel. This book covers the period from after the Israelites settled in the land through the monarchy's inauguration, Saul's reign, and the rise of King David. It is a theological look at this period, not history as we understand it in our time. The text concerns God's work and commands, and how people responded to God.

Today we read the call of Samuel. Samuel is a youth unfamiliar with God's promptings and has not learned to listen to God. God calls Samuel but it takes the elderly priest's Eli's guidance for him to recognize it. Samuel serves as an example for everyone. When God calls, each person needs to reply. Each person needs help to learn the way of God and not get lost in false or misleading movements that may come from pride or selfish voices. When we reply to God, we can be confident that God will be with us and assist us.

Discernment is the tool that helps to decipher the urges, promptings, and movements that arise within hearts. God works slowly with each person and invites them step by step to follow more closely. Attentive listening is essential to recognizing God's call. As in any relationship, as one listens over time, one becomes more attuned to the voice, mood, and emotion expressed. In time, one can distinguish the inner promptings that lead to life, a closer relationship with God, and peace from those that distance one from God, others, and your true self.

The Gospel passage comes again from John. John has structured the first chapter of his Gospel in seven days. God created in seven days; the new creation of the reign of God is presented in seven days. It is a boiled-down presentation of the call and the response of the first disciples. The other Gospels present John baptizing along the southern Jordan River. Jesus is baptized there and then returns to Galilee, at the far north of the river, to call his disciples. John's Gospel has them all in one place. Place is not relevant in John's presentation. All the unnecessary details are laid aside, and the key gospel elements, are there for us to encounter.

Because John remained a popular figure for challenging Herod, the Gospel author wants to emphasize that John was not the messiah but one who came to make known the messiah. John emphasizes that John the Baptist told his disciples to follow Jesus as Jesus walked past.

Jesus is the Lamb of God. This allusion has two connections to the Old Testament. The Passover lamb was killed, and its blood saved the Hebrew people from the angel of death in the final plague in Egypt. (Ex 12: 1 – 14) Secondly, the prophet Isaiah speaks about the

suffering servant. The early Church used this image to try and understand why Jesus, if he was God, died. The image of one suffering for others was recognized in Jesus and in the Lamb of God. While the connection was not made until after the death of Jesus, the gospel writer presents it as a fact at the beginning of the gospel. Here is the truth you need to understand if you want to be a follower of Jesus. This message should be recognized in the beginning. The titles, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, and the Anointed One are all found in the first chapter of John's Gospel.

Our second reading will be from the First Letter to the Corinthians in the coming weeks. The first chapters were read last year. Today, the reading starts in chapter six. Corinth was a major center of commerce. Goods were unloaded in the east and moved by land the few miles to the west across the peninsula, saving sailing days and gaining wealth for Corinth.

The people were strongly rooted in Greek thought that the mind and spirit were good and the body bad. Sins of the flesh were to be expected. What was good and noble was of the spirit. The people of Corinth did not respect nor honor the body. Judaism and Christianity saw the body as central to the person. We are one person with a spiritual aspect and a physical aspect. Our whole self serves God.

Paul is addressing the disrespect shown to individual bodies and immoral behavior. Worship of pagan gods involved temple prostitution. Paul calls them to a new awareness of their bodies. Later, he will teach about resurrection from the dead and joining Jesus with our bodies. We should, therefore, honor and respect our bodies.

Themes: Call to discipleship

Discernment of Call and response

Body as Temple of the Holy Spirit

Dignity of the Body

Reflection Questions:

Have you been aware of God calling you?

How did you recognize it? How have you responded to this call?

Who do you say Jesus is?

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?

Do you dwell with Jesus or abide with him?

What steps do you take to honor and care for your body?

What practices in our society show disrespect or disregard for one's body?

Prayer Suggestions:

For the Church: that we, like Samuel, may say: "Speak Lord, your servant is listening" and use our gifts and talents to serve God and the needs of others

For the transformation of our attitudes: that we may never forget that we belong to Christ and use our minds to seek the truth, our hearts to love, and our physical abilities to serve others

For the grace of recognition: that we may quiet our hearts and minds so that we may perceive God's presence and invitations through the words of scripture and our daily experiences

For greater recognition of the gift of our bodies: that we who are the Body of Christ may grow in our understanding of how God is at work in us and care for our bodies as Temples of God