

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #65

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

A reading from the first Book of Samuel

Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the LORD where the ark of God was.

The LORD called to Samuel, who answered, "Here I am." Samuel ran to Eli and said, "Here I am. You called me." "I did not call you," Eli said. "Go back to sleep."

So he went back to sleep.

Again the LORD called Samuel, who rose and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said. "You called me."

But Eli answered, "I did not call you, my son. Go back to sleep."

At that time Samuel was not familiar with the LORD,

because the LORD had not revealed anything to him as yet.

The LORD called Samuel again, for the third time.

Getting up and going to Eli, he said, "Here I am. You called me."

Then Eli understood that the LORD was calling the youth.

So he said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply,

'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'"

When Samuel went to sleep in his place,

the LORD came and revealed his presence,

calling out as before, "Samuel, Samuel!"

Samuel answered, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

Samuel grew up, and the LORD was with him,

not permitting any word of his to be without effect.

Although we see Samuel as one of the great Old Testament prophets, this story of his call reveals to us that Samuel does not initially recognize that it is God calling to him. The learning curve exhibited by Samuel continues as he matures both physically and spiritually, aided by the presence of the Lord ("Samuel grew up, and the Lord was with him"). God's continuing presence ensures the effectiveness of Samuel's prophetic words. Are we like Samuel, needing to fine tune our spiritual ears to God's call? And when we do hear God's call, what is our

perceives as a summons from the priest, Eli. He runs to Eli and says quite simply, "Here I am." At no point does Samuel demonstrate annoyance at being told three times in succession that Eli did not call him and to go back to sleep, he is ready and willing to obey each summons. When Eli finally realizes it is the Lord calling Samuel, he prepares Samuel with the proper response to attend to the Lord's call, which Samuel obediently follows. At the fourth call, then, Samuel responds to the Lord instead of going to Eli. God then establishes Samuel as a prophet.

READING I

Today's reading from 1 Samuel presents the call narrative of Samuel. Prior to this passage, we learn that Samuel's birth is a result of God hearing his mother's plea for a child after years of barrenness. Thus, Samuel's birth is viewed as a divine act of mercy, and his mother subsequently consecrates her son to temple service. This is why we encounter Samuel here sleeping in the Lord's temple, ready to serve at a moment's notice. Samuel's readiness to serve is evidenced by his quick response to what he

The double negative found in the last phrase can be confusing. Practice to read clearly.

As you prepare, use Samuel's response as your own prayer: "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."

"Son" implies a familiar relationship; Eli (the temple priest in charge of Samuel) does not seem to be irritated that he has been repeatedly awakened. Use a calm voice for Eli's replies.

What an image! Sleeping in the temple where the ark of God was kept. Pause before starting the dialogue and then be clear which characters are speaking: the Lord, Samuel, Eli, and the narrator. Emphasize the first time a repeated phrase appears and subdue the others. Eli = EE-II

For meditation and context:

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10 (8a and 9a)

R. Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.
 "In the written scroll it is prescribed for me,
 and he stooped toward me and heard my cry.
 And he put a new song into my mouth,
 a hymn to our God.
 Sacrifice or offering you wished not,
 but ears open to obedience you gave me.
 Holocausts or sin-offerings you sought not;
 then said I, "Behold I come."
 O LORD, know
 I did not restrain my lips, as you,
 vast assembly;
 I announced your justice in the
 and your law is within my heart!"
 to do your will. O my God, is my delight,
 I announced your justice in the
 vast assembly;
 I did not restrain my lips, as you,
 O LORD, know.

READING II 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord,
 and the Lord is for the body;
 God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.
 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?
 But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one Spirit with him.
 Avoid immorality.
 Every other sin a person commits is outside the body,
 but the immoral person sins against his own body.
 Do you not know that your body
 is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you,
 whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?
 For you have been purchased at a price.
 Therefore glorify God in your body.

Corinthians = kohr-IN-thee-uhnz

Paul uses dense philosophical language.
 Read slowly to aid comprehension. Paul's
 point is important: it is countercultural
 to claim our bodies are temples of the
 Holy Spirit.

Speak as if these were two separate
 questions (the first ending with "you have
 from God," the second ending with "your
 own"). Use a rising inflection for questions
 and give the listener's internal voice time
 to answer.

READING II

response? Are we ready to respond humbly
 and at a moment's notice? Or do we say,
 "Now is not a good time, God, come back
 later when I am not so busy"?

In this reading from
 1 Corinthians, Paul focuses
 on God's call to sexual purity. For the
 Gentiles of this newly formed Christian
 community, this kind of sexual ethics was
 new and presented a steep learning curve.
 To explain this new way of living, Paul
 emphasizes that their "bodies are members

of Christ" and as such their union with Christ
 is a bodily one, not just a spiritual union.
 Building upon this connection between
 body and soul, Paul remarks that the "body
 is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you."
 The relationship they have with God is spiri-
 tual, but it is also a physical reality that
 reminds us that chastity reflects the glory
 of God and can be pursued regardless
 of our state in life. Jesus gave himself
 over to death on the cross, body and blood,
 for our salvation. Not only that, but he
 also comes to us, Body and Blood, in the
 Eucharist. Are we willing to offer in kind to
 God what he offers to us?

GOSPEL John 1:35-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

John was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, "What are you looking for?"

They said to him, "Rabbi!"—which translated means Teacher—, "where are you staying?"

He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they went and saw where Jesus was staying, and they stayed with him that day.

It was about four in the afternoon.

Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus. He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah"—which is translated Christ—.

Then he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas"—which is translated Peter.

speaking first, asking, "What are you looking for?" True discipleship flows from Jesus' initiative. He speaks to us first, and we then have a choice in how we respond. The two disciples respond by remaining with him, and then one of them, Andrew, goes a step further by sharing his encounter with Christ with his brother Simon, who is later known as Peter/Cephas.

Though it is Andrew who brings Simon to Jesus, it is Jesus who again speaks first. With one sentence, Jesus reveals that he already knows who Simon is. Furthermore, he also knows who Simon

will be after embarking on his journey of discipleship. While in the first reading we are told that Samuel matures in the presence of the Lord, Simon's future maturation is implied in Jesus' renaming him at their first encounter.

Like the disciples, our relationship with God is a result of God's initiative and calling. We can choose whether to heed his call and follow or turn a deaf ear to his voice. M.B.

GOSPEL

Today's Gospel reading describes the calling of Jesus' first disciples. In the verses preceding this passage, the focus was on John the Baptist as witness and herald to the coming of Jesus. John had already seen Jesus once before and testified to Jesus being "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). In today's reading, John gives the same witness, this time to the two disciples who are with him.

Upon hearing John's words, the two disciples followed Jesus, yet it is Jesus who takes the initiative in turning to them and

Speak John's prophetic words with conviction: the listening disciples, intrigued by John's words, followed Jesus.

Note all of the names used for Jesus: Lamb of God, Rabbi, Teacher, Messiah, Christ.

Temporal markers indicate a scene change. Pause briefly before beginning the new section.

Naming is of great importance. Peter's new name foreshadows his importance. Cephas = SEE-fuhs