

**LIVING THE GOSPEL**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**January 14, 2024**



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**Theme: "Then he brought him to Jesus."**

**Gathering Prayer**

**All:** Almighty ever-living God, who govern all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**Exploring the Word**

**Gospel Reading: John 1:35-42**

<sup>35</sup>The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup>When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" <sup>37</sup>When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup>Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" <sup>39</sup>"Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour. <sup>40</sup>Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup>The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). <sup>42</sup>And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

**Gospel Notes**

**35-39.** Through these words of the Baptist, these two disciples are moved by grace to approach the Lord. John's testimony is an example of

**Living The Gospel bible study/sharing via Zoom.**  
**Every Wednesday**  
**Time: 8 – 9.30 pm**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2760073734?pwd=cDRZR2JQMGRobVkwdTY3ZVF5L1BwZz09>**

**Meeting ID: 276 007 3734**  
**Passcode: WordOfGod**

**All are welcome!**

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**References:**

- (1) Gospel Notes are taken from The Navarre Bible
- (2) Gospel Reflection and Living Liturgy are taken from "Living Liturgy for Sundays and Solemnities" by Order of St Benedict. Published by Liturgical Ministry, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota  
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- (3) CCC references are taken from Catechism of The Catholic Church

the special graces God distributes to attract people to himself. Sometimes he addresses a person directly by stirring his soul and inviting him to follow him; at other times, as in the present case, he chooses to use someone close to us who knows us, to bring us to meet Christ.

The two disciples already had a keen desire to see the Messiah; John's words move them to try to become friends of our Lord: it is not merely natural curiosity but Christ's personality which attracts them. They want to get to know him, to be taught by him and to enjoy his company. "Come and see" (1:39; cf. 11:34)—a tender invitation to begin that intimate friendship they were seeking. Time and personal contact with Christ will be needed to make them more secure in their vocation. The Apostle St John, one of the protagonists in this scene, notes the exact time it took place: "it was about the tenth hour", roughly four in the afternoon.

Christian faith can never be just a matter of intellectual curiosity; it affects one's whole life: a person cannot understand it unless he really lives it; therefore, our Lord does not at this point tell them in detail about his way of life; he invites them to spend the day with him. St Thomas Aquinas comments on this passage saying that our Lord speaks in a lofty, mystical way because what God is (in himself or in grace) can only be understood through experience: words cannot describe it. We grow in this understanding by doing good works (they immediately accepted Christ's invitation and as a reward "they saw"), by recollection and by applying our mind to the contemplation of divine things, by desiring to taste the sweetness of God, by assiduous prayer. Our Lord invited everyone to do all this when he said, "Come and see", and the disciples discovered it all when, in obedience to our Lord, "they went" and were able to learn by personal experience, whereas they could not understand the words alone (cf. *Commentary on St John, in loc.*).

**40-41.** The evangelist now gives us the name of one of the two disciples involved in the previous scene; he will mention Andrew again in connection with the multiplication of the loaves (cf. 6:8) and the last Passover (cf. 12:22).

We cannot be absolutely sure who the second disciple was; but since the very earliest centuries of the Christian era he has always been taken to be the evangelist himself. The vividness of the account, the detail of giving the exact time, and even John's tendency to remain anonymous (cf. 19:16; 20:2; 21:7, 20) seem to confirm this.

"St John the Apostle, who pours into his narrative so much that is firsthand, tells of his first unforgettable conversations with Christ. "Master

where are you staying?" he said to them, "Come and see." They went and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.'

"This divine and human dialogue completely changed the life of John and Andrew, and Peter and James and so many others. It prepared their hearts to listen to the authoritative teaching which Jesus gave them beside the Sea of Galilee" (J. Escriva, *Christ is passing by*, 108).

Those hours spent with our Lord soon produce the first results of apostolate. Andrew, unable to contain his joy, tells Simon Peter the news that he has found the Messiah, and brings him to him. Now, as then, there is a pressing need to bring others to know the Lord.

"Open your own hearts to Jesus and tell him your story. I don't want to generalize. But one day perhaps an ordinary Christian, just like you, opened your eyes to horizons both deep and new, yet as old as the Gospel. He suggested to you the prospect of following Christ earnestly, seriously, of becoming an apostle of apostles. Perhaps you lost your balance then and didn't recover it. Your complacency wasn't quite replaced by true peace until you freely said 'yes' to God, because you wanted to, which is the most supernatural of reasons. And in its wake came a strong, constant joy, which disappears only when you abandon him" (J. Escriva, *Christ is passing by*, 1).

**42.** What was it like when Jesus looked at someone? From what he says here, he seems both imperious and tender. On other occasions his glance is enough to invite a person to leave everything and follow him, as in the case of Matthew (Mt 9:9); or he seems to be full of love, as in his meeting with the rich young man (Mk 10:21), or he seems angry or sad, because of the Pharisees' unbelief (Mk 2:5), or compassionate, towards the widow of Nain (Lk 7:13). He is able to move Zacchaeus' heart to conversion (Lk 19:5); and he himself is moved by the faith and generosity of the poor widow who gave in alms everything she had (Mk 12:41-44). His penetrating look seems to lay the soul bare to God and provoke one to self-examination and contrition—as happened to the adulterous woman (Jn 8:10) and to Peter who, after denying Christ (Lk 22:61) wept bitterly (Mk 14:72).

"You shall be called Cephas": naming something is the same as taking possession of the thing named (cf. Gen 17:5; 22:28; 32:28; Is 62:2). Thus, for example, Adam when he was made lord of creation, gave names to created things (Gen 2:20). "Cephas" is the Greek transcription of an Aramaic word meaning stone, rock: therefore, St John, writing in Greek, has to explain the meaning of the word Jesus used.

Cephas was not a proper name, but our Lord put it on Peter to indicate his role as his vicar, which he will later on reveal (Mt 16:16-18): Simon was destined to be the stone, the rock, of the Church.

The first Christians regarded this new name as so significant that they used it without translating it (cf. Gal 2:9, 11, 14); later its translation "Peter" (Petros, Petrus) became current, pushing the Apostle's old name—Simon—into the background.

"Son of John": ancient manuscripts include variants, such as "son of Jona".

## **Gospel Focus**

This gospel has a chain of witnessing: John the Baptist points Jesus out to John's own disciples; they leave John behind and follow Jesus. One of them in turn brings his brother to Jesus, and those brothers are Andrew and Simon Peter, who we know as apostles and saints. This is also a fascinating moment in their story. We know how it turns out and how important these men will become to the Christian tradition. However, they do not know yet. They're just meeting Jesus and all they know about him is that he is the kind of guy who gives you a nickname whether you asked for it or not. Yet this ordinary moment of meeting turns into an extraordinary moment of calling and of seekers saying yes in a way that will change their lives—and the lives of countless others to come. Saints are not made in a vacuum, God offers each of us not just a personal relationship but also a community in which to grow and thrive. All of us are dependent on others to bring us closer to Christ and to know him more fully.

## **Gospel Reflection**

Unlike the other three gospels, the Gospel of John does not depict Jesus calling the first disciples while walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. It is John the Baptist who points two of his disciples toward the "Lamb of God." As in the other gospels, they take heed and follow Jesus. However, there is a different dynamic in John's Gospel. Jesus has not called these two, and seeing them following, he turns and questions them. "What are you looking for?" Their reply might seem at first to be oddly out of place. "Where are you staying?"

Here the evangelist introduces one of the key theological emphasis

whole mission are carried out in total communion with the Holy Spirit whom the Father gives him "without measure." (Jn 3:34)

### **Sharing and Discussion**

1. Jesus asked a simple question, 'What are you looking for?' What would be your answer?
2. Jesus later said, 'Come and you will see' How should one respond to this invitation? How have you responded to his invitation?
3. Why and how is discipleship costly? Does it affect your desire or ability to serve God?

### **Closing Prayer**

**All:** Guide us, Lord, we pray, to respond to the needs of the world in ways that are true to our calling. Help us live as faithful stewards of the gospel. We offer our prayers through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Leader:** May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:** Amen

of this gospel: abiding, or staying, with Jesus. The Greek verb *menein*, "to abide," is repeated twice more, as the two went and saw where Jesus was staying [*menein*], and they stayed [*emeinan*] with him." Later in John 15, the image of the vine and branches helps us to envision what it means to be intimately connected to and abide in Jesus and the One who sent him.

In the fourth Gospel, the call to discipleship comes through the witness of someone else. John the Baptist brings Andrew and another unnamed disciple to Jesus. Andrew then brings his brother, Simon Peter, to Jesus (notice that Peter is not the first follower in John's Gospel). Later, Philip brings Nathanael to Jesus (1:45-51), and the Samaritan woman brings her townspeople to him. (4:29-42). Today's reading shows the diverse ways that the call to discipleship can come. Samuel has a direct experience of God, and, with the help of a more experienced companion, is able to understand what God is asking. In the gospel, the call comes through the mediation of another's witness.

In whatever way the call to discipleship comes, Paul reminds us that we do not encounter the Holy as embodied spirits. Rather, our bodies are sacred, "temple(s)" of the Holy Spirit." That Jesus took on human flesh and that God raised him bodily underscore the importance of the body. A corporeal spirituality helps us counter any exploitation of the body: in sex trade, or overexposure in the manner of dress, or the battering of bodies with abuse or torture, or the devaluing of aging bodies. It is through our bodies that we experience godliness and in them that we glorify God.

Reflecting on our own experience in the light of the gospel today, it is a good time to consider the person or people who have been most instrumental in bringing us to Jesus and to pray in thanksgiving for them. And the more challenging question: Who have we brought, or are we bringing, to Jesus?

### **Old/New Testament and CCC links**

#### **First Reading — 1 Samuel 3:3-10,19**

<sup>3</sup> Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup> Then the LORD called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am." <sup>5</sup> And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli

said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down. <sup>6</sup> Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." <sup>7</sup> Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD : The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup> The LORD called Samuel a third time, and Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup> So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. <sup>10</sup> The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." <sup>19</sup> The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground.

### **Responsorial Psalm — Ps 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10**

***R: Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.***

I have waited, waited for the Lord, and he stooped toward me and heard my cry.  
And he put a new song into my mouth, a hymn to our God **(R)**

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." **(R)**

"In the written scroll it is prescribed for me, to do your will,  
O my God, is my delight, and your law is within my heart!" **(R)**

I announced your justice in the vast assembly; I did not restrain my lips, as you,  
O Lord, know. **(R)**

### **Second Reading — 1 Corinthians 6:13-15,17-20**

<sup>13</sup> The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup> By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. <sup>15</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?

<sup>17</sup> But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit. <sup>18</sup> Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. <sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body.

### **Catechism of The Catholic Church**

**608.** After agreeing to baptize him along with the sinners, John the Baptist looked at Jesus and pointed him out as the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world". (Jn 1:29; cf. Lk 3:21; Mt 3:14-15; Jn 1:36) By doing so, he reveals that Jesus is at the same time the suffering Servant who silently allows himself to be led to the slaughter and who bears the sin of the multitudes, and also the Paschal Lamb, the symbol of Israel's redemption at the first Passover. (Is 53:7,12; cf. Jer 11:19; Ex 12:3-14; Jn 19:36; 1 Cor 5:7) Christ's whole life expresses his mission: "to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mk 10:45)

**719.** John the Baptist is "more than a prophet." (Lk 7:26) In him, the Holy Spirit concludes his speaking through the prophets. John completes the cycle of prophets begun by Elijah. (Cf. Mt 11:13-14) He proclaims the imminence of the consolation of Israel; he is the "voice" of the Consoler who is coming. (Jn 1:23; cf. Isa 40:1-3) As the Spirit of truth will also do, John "came to bear witness to the light." (Jn 1:7; cf. Jn 15:26; 5:35) In John's sight, the Spirit thus brings to completion the careful search of the prophets and fulfills the longing of the angels. (Cf. 1 Pet 1:10-12) "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.... Behold, the Lamb of God." (Jn 1:33-36)

**1286.** In the Old Testament the prophets announced that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the hoped-for Messiah for his saving mission. (Cf. Isa 11:2; 61:1; Lk 4:16-22) The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism by John was the sign that this was he who was to come, the Messiah, the Son of God. (Cf. Mt 3:13-17; Jn 1:33-34) He was conceived of the Holy Spirit; his whole life and his