

## 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

By Fr. Charles Irvin

Today's first reading gives us a beautiful and simple story from the Old Testament's First Book of Samuel. A young boy, Samuel, apprenticing with an old priest, Eli, is awakened by a voice, a voice he heard perhaps in a dream. He thinks Eli is calling him. Eli is wise. Thinking it to be an illusion he tells the boy to go back to sleep. The voice calls a second time. After the third time Eli begins to realize that God is really calling the boy and so tells him "If you are called again reply "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."

Once again we see that God takes the initiative. This is the first and most fundamental realization we must all have. God offers, we respond. We may not understand why but we must always be open to God's initiatives. And God's initiatives come in unexpected ways to unexpected people. For even though young Samuel was just a kid, a kid who was "not familiar with the Lord," who was not particularly "religious," he became God's first Old Testament prophet, the first in a long line of prophets.

Similarly with St. Peter. He wasn't particularly religious. He was brash, presumptuous, and unreliable, and yet became the chief among the other Twelve Apostles, not by his choice and certainly not by theirs. He became the "Rock" who turned out to be so by God's choice. Just why God chose him remains a mystery.

For Eli, for Samuel, and for Peter, the critical thing was in the fact of their response and in the *quality* of their response. They were open to the belief that God acts in human history and that God acts in human lives.

Is there such a thing as destiny, or is everything what it is, and is everyone who they are, simply because of blind chance? Simply by accident? Cynics and fatalists claim that to be so. People of faith see purposefulness in life.

The awesome reality is that God wanted to be personally involved with Samuel. And the equally awesome reality is that God wants to be personally involved with you, in all that you think and say and do. He wants to be so involved with you that you become and actual source of His presence, His power, and His love in our world.

It's not easy to discern our destiny and to feel with certainty that our lives are important to God and that we play a significant role in His plans and purposes for those around us. God makes us temples of His Holy Spirit. Our culture tells us that our bodies are to be used as temples of pleasure. We believe in the resurrection of our bodies and life everlasting in them forever. And while the world tells us otherwise we believe that our bodies and souls are a part of God's plans.

Samuel's call is your call. My call is your call. We stand on the same ground and occupy the same place in the eyes of God. He wants to be with us so much that when we speak He speaks, when we touch He touches, when we bless He blesses, when we love He loves.

The big issue for us is not whether God speaks to us. It is rather seeing the hand of God and the presence of God in people and in events. He uses them as His means of reaching us. The most critical issue for us is whether and how we respond. It's the question of our willingness to respond.

God has a Word for you...He has something to say to you. God has something in mind for you—personally and individually. Are you willing to listen up and pay attention to Him? To take a good look at what He's trying to say to you? God has a Word for you. He has something He wants to say to you.

To be aware of what God wants to say to you requires that you find some times and make some space in your world in which you can be quiet and reflective. The Evil One will try to fill you ears with noise and your mind with distractions. You will find yourself in a religious battle, one that's not easily won. But do not easily give up—Jesus has promised to be with you. And do not worry about what to say—the Holy Spirit will give you what you need. The big question is not how — the big question is whether. Will you be like Samuel?

The next time you pray, be sure to say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."

### READINGS OF THE WEEK

1 Samuel 3: 3-19

1 Corinthians 6: 13-20

John 1: 35-42

January 15, 2012

# 靈 修 生 活

## 你 們 找 什 麼

張 春 申

禮儀年中將臨期和聖誕期後開始常年期。常年期是分為二段，中間由四旬期和復活期隔開。常年期前後二段總共有三十三或三十四星期，整體說來是紀念主基督的傳教生活。今天是常年期第二主日。

是的，常年期每個主日的福音，或者關於耶穌講的道理，或者關於耶穌的行動。不過千萬應當注意，我們在禮儀中，不應當把那些道理或行動，當作過去的歷史。梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議頒佈的禮儀憲章對於復活的基督不同的臨在方式有著相當完整的說明。大公會議說：「基督常與教會同在，尤其臨在禮儀中。在彌撒聖祭中，祂一方面臨在司祭身上……，另一方面，祂更臨在聖體形象裏。祂又因自己的德能臨在聖事內……。祂也臨在自己的言語內，因而教會恭讀聖經，實在是基督親自發言……。」

這樣看來，每當我們在彌撒中，聆聽福音中耶穌的道理時，應當深信，此時此刻，耶穌自己面對我們在說話。同樣，每當我們聆聽福音中耶穌行動時，應當深信，耶穌的行動。比如施行奇跡、寬赦人罪的耶穌，此時此刻在我們中間。主日的福音不是敘述過去的歷史，而是宣告耶穌正在向我們施教，也正在我們中間實踐救恩。所以我們必須在信仰中打開心胸，吸取耶穌的訓誨；也隨時準備好祂來變化我們。如果誰有這樣的態度，聆聽了今天的若望福音，一定會掀起極深的經驗。

耶穌問跟隨後面的兩個若翰的門徒說：「你們找什麼？」，這是人生的大問題，今天耶穌也問我們每一個人。人好像生來便是在找。有人找名，有人找錢，有人找權，有人找常生不老……。也有人找為國家社會服務，也有人找己立立人，己達達人……。兩個門徒並沒有回答耶穌他們在找什麼；他們卻反問耶穌住在那裏。這是否告訴我們：他們曾經找過好多，也許找到過好多，然而他們還是徬徨不安，人世間的一切，往往找到了又失去，或者找到了又不滿足，還要找。所以在千找萬找之後，人渴望一個可住的安頓之處、一個滿足人心的住所。因此，兩個門徒歷盡了找的經驗之後，問耶穌住在那裡。

耶穌向他們說：你們來看看罷！今天耶穌也向我們說，來看看罷！我們每人如同兩個門徒，經歷了人生旅途中的尋找，也渴望一個心靈可住的安頓之處，那麼去看看罷！當然這不是普通的看看，或者走馬看花而已；更不是好探新奇地看看，而是打開心靈，導致信仰的看看。正如若望福音序言中所說：「於是，聖言成了血肉，寄居在我們中間；我們見了祂的光榮，正如父獨生子的光榮，滿溢恩寵和真理。」兩位門徒在那天傍晚，初次看見了耶穌，產生信仰。並且，那一天就在祂那裡住下了。可以說，他們在降生成人的天主聖子那裡，發現了滿足心靈的安頓之處，從此他們這樣跟隨了耶穌，如同葡萄樹的枝條，住在耶穌基督：葡萄樹上一樣。那麼今天我們也響應耶穌的召叫去看看祂，在福音的描寫中看看祂、在彌撒聖祭中看看祂，末了，讓我們也住在祂內，因為我們領受的聖體聖事正是祂住在我們內，我們住在祂內。這樣在我們歷經人生勞苦尋找之後，在耶穌基督內得到一個心靈憩息的住所。

摘自「妙音送長風」

## 本 週 讀 經

二 零 一 二 年 一 月 十 五 日

撒 上 3:3-19 ； 格 前 6:13-20 ； 若 1:35-42