



**OPENING PRAYER**

Guide: *Here I am, Lord, to do your will.*

All: **I have waited, waited for the Lord, and he bent down toward me and heard my cry. And he gave me a new song, a hymn to our God.**

Leader: I announced your justice in the vast assembly; I did not restrain my lips, as you O Lord know.

All: **In the scroll it is written for me to do your will, O my God. It is my delight, and your law is within my heart!**

Guide: *We invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit:*

**Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send, Lord your spirit and renew the face of the earth.**

**Oh God, that you have instructed the hearts of your faithful with the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us through the same spirit that always enjoy her divine consolation. By Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**FIRST READING** [1 Samuel 3 (3b-10), (19)]

***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.***

The call to Samuel serves as a model or precursor for the infancy narratives of Jesus. You may compare the last verse (19) with Luke 2:52 " ... and Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature, and in appreciation before God and before men ... ". Through this reading and the message of this Sunday's Gospel, we come to understand John the Baptist to be a witness to the Messiah's baptism even though it is not directly a story about the baptism of Jesus.

Just as Jesus answered to the call of the Father in his baptism to fulfill his mission, Samuel also responds to the invitation of God to be his prophet and says with the words "Speak, Lord, that your servant is listening". (Likewise, throughout the Gospel of John we find that the Son Jesus attends the words of the Father). The text does not tell us what the Father said to Samuel, but it is clear: God knew him very well, and had Samuel never heard his name, he would have never grown to reach his full potential as the story implies happened.



- (1) What words or expressions have caught your attention from the above reading?
- (2) Do you think that God always calls at the most convenient moments?
- (3) How can we know that we are being called by God?
- (4) The word "vocation" means "calling". God is constantly calling and there are always vocations. Why is it important that you answer those calls from God? Do you think that God just calls priests? Are there other ways to respond to the vocation? How?

**SECOND READING** [1 Corinthians 6 (13c-15th), (17-20) ]

**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.***

In most cases during Ordinary Time, the second reading is independent of the binomial, which means the Gospel and First Reading. Over the next few Sundays, we will be reading excerpts from the first letter to the Corinthians and we are going to be discovering a theme in their messages.

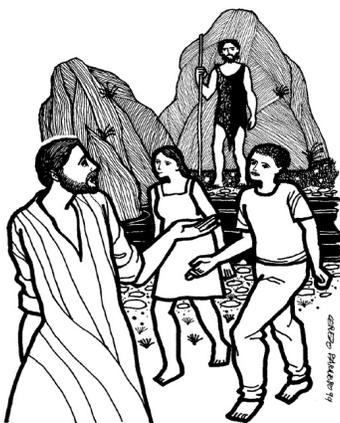
In today's passage, Paul refers to a case of scandalous behavior in the community of the Christians of Corinth. The apostle is not interested in the identity of the sinner, but in the inability of the community to discipline. Therefore, he sends a message to the collective community that still rings true today.

In our times we are "taught" to be self-indulgent to the point that we are familiar with the Nike slogan "just do it", which encourages us to do whatever we'd like to do. Corinth was faced with a similar reality and so the apostle reminded them as he reminds us that we are temples of God. We are not meant to do whatever we want with the bodies God has given us, but they are to be homes to host His Spirit.

Paul affirms that the Christian community is a single unit which is the Body of Christ. Since each member is part of the whole, everything is affected by the immorality of any of its parts. An inappropriate use of the body is a sacrilege against the temple of the God.



- (1) Have you ever heard that your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit?
- (2) If each one is a living temple, how do we honor God when we respect the dignity of others?
- (3) Do you remember invoking the Holy Spirit in any situation in your life? (not just in Church)
- (4) Do you have stories to share about the response of the Holy Spirit when you asked for His assistance?



**Gospel** [John 1 (6-8), (19-28) ]

***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.***

In the first reading we saw God calling Samuel and now we read that Jesus called his first two Apostles in a similar way. First, he called them and when they showed interest, Jesus asked "What are you looking for?". That question contains within it several questions, such as "Why do you follow me?", "How are you?", or "What's lacking in your life?". Is God the one you are trying to find? Do you think that you might find Him in the answers to your questions?

This is the Johannine version of the call of the first apostles which connects to the disciples of John the Baptist. The first disciple of Jesus were disciples of John the Baptist who became interested in Christ when they asked where he was staying and he invited them to follow him.

(1) Jesus asked, "What are you looking for?" In this question, he was asking "What is the most important to you? If he asked you this question today, what would have been your response?

(2) The question "Where do you live? " also means "How can we spend more time with you?". Given this perspective, what can we do to spend time in the presence of God?

(3) What did the disciples find when they decided to spend their time with Jesus? What can we learn from this experience?

### CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Lord of the day and night, of the beginning and of the end: At the closing of this meeting, once again we lift up our hearts to You, divine source of all life.*

All: **We thank you for the gifts you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the love expressed in companionship and understanding, mutual respect and shared ideas. We give you thanks for your holy power that will help us in our concerns that we have shared. For these and all the gifts that come from You, we give you thanks.**

Leader: *Lord hear our prayers* (attendees can propose their own needs of prayer)

All: **In the same way in which we have being blessed by your presence as we meet, we ask now to bless our safe return to our homes. May your holy blessing be over us + in the name of the Father ...**

Leader: *May the King of the eternal glory gather us together in His heavenly banquet. Amen.*