

Homily for the Second Sunday In Ordinary Time 2021:

Samuel answered: "Speak, Lord your servant is listening."

We learn from today's first reading that Samuel had as yet no knowledge of God and that it was Eli who helped Samuel to recognise the voice of God speaking to him. Once Samuel had grasped that it was the Lord, he displayed a willing obedience to God's Word, which is further expressed in the words of today's response:

"Here I am, Lord! I come to do Your will."

As a parish community part of our responsibility is to help one another hear the voice of the Lord, and as a consequence of hearing it to be able to say:

"Here I am, Lord! I come to do Your will."

This requires a humble submission to discovering God's Will for us, if you like attuning our spiritual antennae to the frequency which will best allow us to clearly hear the voice of the Lord. We need the wisdom and insight of the Church and of one another if we are to help each other grow in discovering God's Will. We see how Eli once he understood that it was the Lord who was calling the boy, said to Samuel:

"Go and lie down, and if someone calls say, 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.'"

Living through the pandemic has challenged us to look more closely at our priorities as a parish community. In some respects the pandemic has highlighted both our strengths and our weaknesses. We are being asked to search for new ways of creating community and of serving one another in works of love. I am confident that we will be able to face these challenges if we continue to listen to the voice of the Lord and to surrender generously to carrying out His will.

Today's Gospel offers us the tools for moving forward with vision and confidence. At the heart of the future of our parish must be the desire to lead others to Christ – to spend time in His company and to discover the joy of being Called and Chosen by Christ. Today's Gospel gives us a very clear illustration of what we are working towards: John Looking intently at Jesus says to his disciples: ***"Look, there is the Lamb of God."*** The two disciples follow Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, ***"What do you want?"*** – this is an extraordinary question posed by Jesus, not only to the two

disciples, but to each and every one – a question that touches on our deepest longings and desires.

They answered *“Rabbi – which means Teacher- where do you live?” “Come and see”, Jesus replied, so they went and saw where He lived and stayed with Him the rest of that day.”*

The result of spending time with Jesus captivates their hearts and Andrew can't wait to tell his brother Simon.

“Early next morning Andrew met his brother and said to him, “We have found the Messiah – which means Christ – and he took Simon to Jesus.”

By spending time in His company we too will discover the joy of our Vocation, and we will be helped to bring others to Christ so that they also will encounter the one person who will give meaning, purpose and joyful fulfilment to their lives. As we read in today's communion antiphon:

“We have come to know and to believe in the love that God has for us.”

(1 John 4:16)