

(B2) SUNDAY 2 OF THE YEAR

(JANUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2021)

**Readings:** 1 Samuel 3: 3 – 10, 19; Psalm 39 (40); 1 Corinthians 6: 13 – 20; John 1: 35 – 42.

Today's Gospel Reading is a preliminary to the readings from the Gospel of Mark, which we shall hear on most Sundays during the coming year. It tells of the calling of Andrew (known to Eastern Christians as 'the First-Called'), and his introduction of his brother Simon to Jesus. Both – as we shall hear next Sunday – were eventually called to leave everything and become full-time followers of Jesus.

The first reading tells of the calling of the child Samuel who would become one of the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, through whom God's choice of David as king would be revealed.

Taken together these two readings give us a theme for today – the theme of God's call to each of us. We generally use the word vocation (which is just a Latin-based word for call) when we think about a few particular roles – in the Church, priests, nun or monks, or in the world, nurses, doctors or teachers. But the simple truth is that God calls every single one of us.

In the first place the Father calls each of us to be a follower of his Son – a disciple of Jesus – and that's a vocation shared by all of us. By virtue of that call there are many things we have in common – not least our sharing in the celebration of the Eucharist

But God also calls each one of us individually. I think no one has put this better than Saint John Henry Newman. He wrote: *"God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next...He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work...Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me. Still, He knows what He is about."*

In these days, when many of us are deprived of much or all of what makes life enjoyable and purposeful (including for many sharing in the Eucharist), may Newman's words encourage us to remain faithful to our calling.