

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time



“You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas,”
which is translated Peter”.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus invites Andrew and his companion to come to his home and spend time with him. He, in turn brings his brother, Simon Peter. We are all invited to respond to the invitation of Jesus to be with him and to establish and deepen a relationship with him.

Samuel 3:3-10. 19

Samuel hears the call of God and responds: “Your servant is listening.”



“Sam! Sam!” “Here I am”

What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? Surely to listen and hear his voice, and go where he leads us. Today, as we enter the ordinary season of the year, we begin our story of Jesus’ life and ministry with the calling of the first disciples. John the Baptist points to the Lamb of God - and the disciples follow where he points. The words of Jesus to them are simple and inviting: “Come and see.”

This echoes the calling of Samuel - a simple call, just his name; Samuel misunderstands at first. Then: “Speak, Lord; your servant is listening.”

The Psalm today underlines this: we (the disciples of the Lord) say together: “Here I am, Lord ! I come to do your will.” We hear his call, and we freely go to him, and listen again to the words of the Master.

1 Corinthians 6:13-15. 17-20

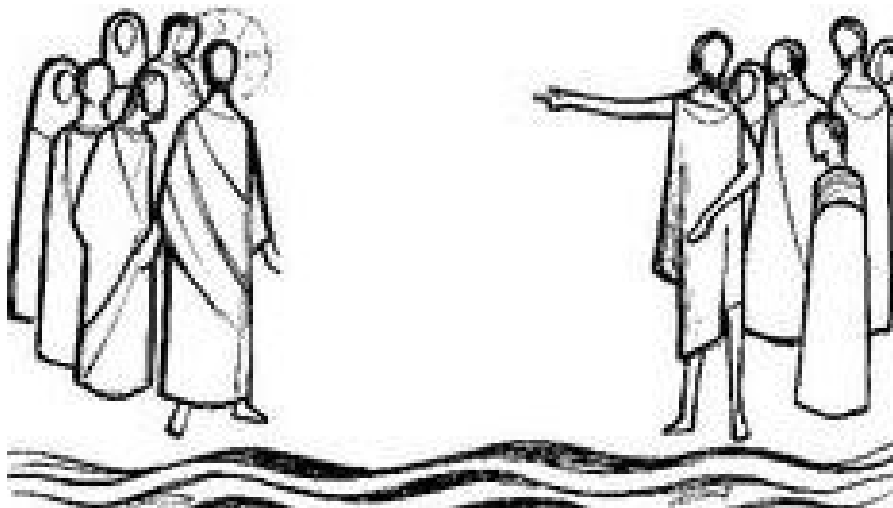
Use your body for the glory of God, for it is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

John 1:35-42

Jesus invites two budding disciples to come and spend time with him.

Reflection

The day after the Baptism of Jesus, John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and he pointed him out as the “Lamb of God.” Just as the Passover lamb was sacrificed to liberate the Hebrew people from slavery, Jesus was the one who came to take away the world's sins. Two of the Baptist's disciples followed Jesus out of curiosity. Upon seeing the two of them, Jesus invited them to follow him as his disciples. The new disciples addressed Jesus as their “Rabbi” (teacher), but they soon discovered that he was the “Messiah,” God's anointed one. One of them, Andrew, brought his brother Simon to Jesus. Jesus changed Simon's name to “Cephas,” meaning “rock” in the Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke. Such a name was appropriate for a strong character like Simon. Changing a person's name indicated a new relationship and function, and a designation of his leadership. He would be the rock, the foundation upon which Jesus would build his Church.



Even though we're reading the Gospel of Mark this year, today's Gospel is from John's Gospel. The reason is that it tells us about something not found in Mark's Gospel—that some disciples of John the Baptist began to follow Jesus on the basis of John the Baptist's own testimony.

In Matthew, Mark & Luke, Jesus' first followers give up their previous occupation as fishermen in order to follow Jesus. In John, they give up their commitment to John the Baptist in order to follow Jesus. But, they do this on the basis of John the Baptist's own witness. Almost certainly today's reading reflects the historical reality that some of John the Baptist's disciples were among the first disciples or followers of Jesus.

John the Baptist called Jesus the “Lamb of God.” He had used this title already (Jn 1:29). “Lamb of God” is a phrase that’s full of Old Testament imagery, particularly the imagery used by Isaiah about what he called ‘The Suffering Servant’, but it also recalling the lamb used at the Passover meal. When he uses this rich designation for Jesus, John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Redeemer who will save the world from its sin. John the Baptist now disappears; he’s completed his task of giving witness to Jesus and of pointing him out to other people.

Two former disciples of John the Baptist now “follow” Jesus. The Gospel-writer uses that verb, “to follow.” “Follow” has got two levels of meaning. First, “follow” means literally to journey along with Jesus. Secondly, “follow” means to become a disciple or “follower” of Jesus. The question Jesus asks the two (“what are you looking for?”) makes sense in the context of this story. But, at the more symbolic level, his words question the disciples about what they are looking for in choosing to follow him. These are the first words spoken by Jesus in the Gospel of John. His question is addressed to the two disciples but it is also addressed to you and me, the readers of the Gospel.

These two have become disciples of Jesus; they now use the Hebrew title ‘Rabbi’ (teacher) for him. They ask Jesus where he is “staying.” This question to him also operates on two levels. At the literal level, they simply want to know Jesus’ address; his postcode, if you like. But on the symbolic level the verb “to stay” is often used of the deep, intimate and permanent relationship between God and humanity. Jesus’ invitation to them (“come and see”) is an offer to see him with the eyes of faith and to enter into a deep relationship with him.

Up to this point the two disciples have remained anonymous. Now we learn the name of one of them — Andrew. He is introduced as the brother of Simon (Peter). This is the way John, the Gospel-writer, introduces the call of Simon. Andrew introduced Jesus to Simon as the “Messiah.” That word “Messiah” comes from the Hebrew *mashiach*, which means the “Anointed One;” it refers to the ancient Jewish practice of anointing kings and prophets with oil.

The best Greek equivalent is the word *christos*, which literally means “covered in oil”! The title “Christ” is, of course, derived from *Christos*, ‘the anointed one’, and means the same as “Messiah.”

The Jews in the first century AD believed that the Messiah, when he came, would be a powerful king who would destroy the Roman occupation of Palestine and rule over a united Israel. Andrew and the other disciples would have to learn that Jesus is not that kind of Messiah.

According to John, the Gospel-writer, Jesus changed Simon's name to Kephas (Peter) when he first met him. Matthew locates this story well into Galilean ministry of Jesus. This is a good example of how different Gospel-writers use traditions about Jesus in different ways according to who they're writing for. The writer of this Fourth Gospel places the event here to show clearly that Jesus had, right from the beginning, awareness of Peter's future role and ministry in the Church.



To sum up:

In that short reading today there are three different names for Jesus — “Lamb of God,” “Rabbi” and “Messiah.” It seems Jesus' disciples experienced him in different ways and gave witness accordingly.

Perhaps it is because each one of his followers had his own expectations and own needs where Jesus was concerned.

You are a disciple of Jesus. Spend a little time today thinking about how you think of Jesus, what you would prefer to call him; what is your own favourite title for Jesus.

Ask yourself what your expectations of him are?

What are your needs which only he can meet?

WORDSEARCH

E	I	B	B	A	R	H	P	E	C	DISCIPLES
H	A	I	S	S	E	M	A	S	T	LAMB
R	E	H	C	A	E	T	R	E	M	RABBI
C	G	K	E	B	H	E	E	L	O	TEACHER
A	N	W	C	R	W	P	T	P	N	FOLLOWERS
E	I	O	S	O	E	H	E	I	R	ANDREW
T	N	L	L	T	R	T	P	C	I	BROTHER
I	R	L	A	H	D	O	E	S	G	PETER
N	O	O	M	E	N	R	T	I	N	MORNING
F	M	F	B	R	A	B	B	D	E	MESSIAH
										CEPHAS
										ROCK

