

## Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

A boy came to Sunday School late. Knowing he was usually very prompt, his teacher asked, "Johnny, is there anything wrong?"

"No, ma'am, not really," he said. "I was going to go fishing, but my daddy told me that I needed to get on up and go to church." The teacher was very impressed and asked Johnny if his father had explained to him why it was more important to go to church than to go fishing.

"Yes ma'am, he did," Johnny said. "My daddy said he didn't have enough bait for both of us."

Dear Friends,

After the Christmas season, we start the ordinary year, it is like starting from the beginning. The readings introduce our vocation, in other words how God gets introduced to us. The first reading and gospel explains how God gets introduced in various ways, we have a couple of examples mentioned in the reading today.

The first reading, from the book of Samuel, tells the story of God's calling to Samuel. Samuel was a special child given by God at the request of his mother Hannah (1 Samuel 1:9-28). Is this not the prayer of every mother? She promised to give her son back to God, which she did. He remained in the temple.

God meets Samuel in the temple. Samuel has been serving in the temple for quite some time. The opening line of this passage says that Samuel was lying down within the temple of the Lord (1 Sam. 3:3). This indicates that he was always in the temple. Still, he had not met God.

I am reminded of a small fish swimming in the ocean. It was swimming here and there as if searching for something. A big fish asked the small fish: "What are you searching for?" The small fish answered: "The ocean". It is possible to be immersed in the ocean, and still not be aware of it.

It is possible for us to be in God's presence and still not be aware of God as in the case of Samuel. Samuel was a child and, hence, his ignorance need not be made much of. What about us when we take God for granted when our life is smooth-sailing, and begin searching for God mainly when things become tough for us?

In the Gospel, we come across two adults getting introduced to Jesus. In the case of Samuel, God gets introduced in the temple, whereas in the Gospel, Jesus gets introduced on the roadside. Both in the Bible, as well as in human history, God gets introduced more often in very ordinary circumstances and places than in the holy of holies. Since God gets introduced in very ordinary situations, many of us tend to miss

the importance of it. Even in the case of the two disciples of John, they could have missed Jesus. But they made extra effort. They followed Him.

One aspect of this passage struck me ... the idea of Andrew making efforts to introduce the Lord to his brother Simon. As siblings, we tend to introduce our brothers and sisters to many things and people in life. But how many of us introduce God to our own brothers and sisters? In how many families is God is a topic of our conversations?

Do we spend time in silence listening for the Lord? And how do we respond? Introducing others to Christ and sharing our story is a great way to do that. For that we need to say like Andrew that we have found the Messiah. Andrew was humble enough to introduce Christ to Peter, and Jesus took over on Peter. Do we have the same humility to introduce Christ to someone in our family and let the Holy Spirit take over?

Are we still looking for the Messiah? Or have we found out how to follow? Where are you at?