

15 January 2018 (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B)

1 Samuel 3:3-10,19; Psalm 39(40):2,4,7-10; 1 Corinthians 6:13-15,17-20; John 1:35-42.

### **What do you want?**

As we start a new year and therefore a new stage in our journey of discipleship, we are invited to reflect on this reading from the gospel according to John. It is early in the ministry of Jesus – if we follow John’s timeline, this is ‘the third day’ (Jn 1:35) – and John the Baptist points Jesus out declaring him to be ‘the Lamb of God!’ This declaration is in itself an important moment in the context of Jesus who will eventually be sacrificed on the altar of the cross. The two disciples following the Baptist immediately start following Jesus.

Andrew and his unnamed companion are obviously on a journey; they are not satisfied with simply sitting back and watching the world go by; they have already been moved by the Baptist’s preaching and are in search of a deeper relationship with their God. This attitude of openness to God is an important starting point for what follows.

Jesus turns around and asks the two disciples: ‘what do you want?’ This simple question needs to be read at a deeper level; Jesus does not simply ask the disciples ‘why are you following me?’ but also: ‘what are you really looking for?’ It is interesting to note that these are the very first words placed on Jesus’ mouth in this gospel!

What do you want? The question Jesus asks Andrew and his friend is also asked of the readers of John’s gospel and of each one of us today. Like these two disciples we are in some way searching for something deeper; we have some level of openness to listening to God’s invitation. What is it that we are looking for? As we read on this gospel passage we notice that the disciples are not yet clear about who Jesus is; first they call him ‘teacher’ and then they refer to him as ‘messiah.’ This lack of clear knowledge about who Jesus is, is not a hindrance at this stage; what is of utmost importance is their openness to listen and to follow. Jesus invites them to go and see where he lived.

Jesus takes advantage of the disciples’ openness and invites them further. They asked him ‘where do you live?’ and he calls them to ‘come and see.’ The disciples did not simply ask for his address or his postcode to satisfy their curiosity, again the question has a deeper meaning. The original Greek word has an inference of ‘where do you stay, where do you remain?’ Hence the deeper question is: ‘who are you?’ Jesus says: ‘come!’

‘Come and see!’ Come and look deeper, not at what my residence is made of, but at my being. If you come and stay with me then you will be able to get a better idea of who I really am and what it is that I can offer. Come and see is actually an invitation for a deeper connection with Jesus.

What do I want? Why am I reading this? Why am I baptised? Why do I belong to a Christian community? What is it I am really after? I need to ask these questions very regularly and be sincere with my answers. Because of my openness, Jesus invites me to go even deeper and to enter into a deeper relationship with him. I too am invited to go and see where Jesus lives and who he really is.

This is the invitation the Church gives us at the beginning of a new Church year: come and see. Like the disciples I need to continually deepen my understanding of who Jesus is.

Fr Mario