



ONE MISSION, TWO PARISHES

Saint Timothy's & Saint Luke the Evangelist
Catholic Parishes, Forest Hill & Blackburn South

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WEEKLY BULLETIN: SUNDAY 14 JANUARY 2024

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME — YEAR B

REACH OUT IN LOVE AND MERCY: MARK 6: 32 - 34



Readings this week: 1 Sam 3:3 – 10, 19; Ps 39; 1 Cor 6:13 -15, 17 - 20; Jn 1:35 - 42.

Gospel Reflection ~ Greg Sunter

Jesus' invitation to 'Come and See' is a powerful image in this week's gospel. It is not a simple reply to the question of where Jesus is living; in some ways it is a summary of his whole ministry – come and see what I am on about and become part of it. It is typical of the invitational nature of Jesus' ministry. Throughout the gospels, Jesus offers and invites, he does not force his ministry onto anyone. When he invites us to 'Come and See' it is an invitation to 'give it a go'; take a chance; let go of what we know. To 'Come and See' is exactly what Jesus invited the apostles to do. In this week's reading, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, takes up the invitation and becomes a follower of Jesus. He is so impressed with what he sees in Jesus that he finds his brother and tells him that they've found the Messiah and that Simon should come and join them. Jesus immediately gives Simon a new nickname: the Rock (Peter). There are many instances throughout the Bible of people taking or being given new names. Abram became Abraham; Jacob became Israel; Saul became Paul. This change of name is used as a sign that they have encountered God in a special way and have taken on a new life – a new commitment to God. In this instance, Simon is becoming a disciple of Jesus, a trusted and influential one at that. Unlike the call of Samuel in today's first reading, in which the call to discipleship is heard as a booming voice, Andrew and Simon experience the call through personal encounter with Jesus. A booming voice from the sky might be helpful, but for most of us the call comes in much more subtle ways through our prayer and reflection on interaction with others.

Living the Gospel – Vocation: These days, the word 'vocation' seems to be applied to whatever job someone happens to find themselves in. More traditionally, the word carries with it a sense of undertaking work that has a deliberate purpose about it and that is outwardly focused. Usually, there is a sense that there is 'importance' to the work and that it is linked to God's dream for the world. The Church has tended to use vocation in reference to religious life. The word comes from the Latin, *vocare*, meaning call or name. Realising to what it is we are called can be one of the great challenges of life.

Have you thought? Why disciples? Why did Jesus call a group of people to follow him closely and share in his ministry? Certainly, it was not uncommon at the time that a charismatic leader might attract a group of followers and 'hangers-on' but Jesus appears to have deliberately called some people to travel with him and share in what he was about. So much of what Jesus spoke about was living in right relationships: with God; and with one another. Rather than simply being a 'back-up group' for Jesus, the disciples provided a lived example of trying to live in right relationships. They didn't always get it right, but they were on the way.

From the perspective of ... The Disciples: We'd been following John the Baptist for nearly a year. He was a great man doing great work. He had called us to repent and baptised us in the river. We were so impressed with him that we began to follow him. There'd been plenty of other healers and preachers to follow but John seemed to be something special – some had talked about him being the messiah! Then all of a sudden John pointed out Jesus and called him the lamb of God. There was something different about this man and it just seemed right to leave John behind and go with Jesus.

REACH OUT IN ...

Whitehorse Deanery
Eastern Region
Archdiocese of Melbourne

Rev Father Gerard

Parish Priest

Sonya O'Farrell

Part-time Parish Secretary

Wednesdays,

Thursdays & Fridays

10.00am – 2.00pm

SUNDAY MASS

ST: & SL: Saturday Vigil @ 6.00pm

Sunday ST: @ 10.30am *Australian*

5.00pm – *Vietnamese*

& SL: @ 8.30am

WEEKDAY MASS & SL: ROSARY

ST: Weds. & Thurs. @ 9.15am

Fri. @ 10.00am

1st Wednesday of the month

@ 10.00am Mass of Anointing.

SL: Tues. @ 5.00pm

Wed., Thurs. & Fri. @ 9.30am

Sat. @ 9.00am

RECONCILIATION

SL: Saturday 9.30am – 10.00am &

5.30pm – 5.50pm

SL: EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION

The Blessed Sacrament is exposed
for Adoration Wednesday

Start: 7.00pm | End: 8.00pm

MACS Catholic Primary School

21 Stevens Road, Vermont, 3133 Vic

Tel: (03) 9878 4188

Ms. Anne Maree Jones Principal

Email: principal@sttims.catholic.edu.au

Website: <https://sttims.catholic.edu.au/>

MACS Catholic Primary School

46 Orchard Grove,

Blackburn South Vic 3130

Tel: (03) 9877 4023

Mrs. Clare Ryan: Principal

Email: principal@slblackburnst.catholic.edu.au

Website: slblackburnst.catholic.edu.au

Prayer to Saint Timothy

O God, who adorned Saint Timothy
with apostolic virtues, grant,
through his intercession that, living
justly and devoutly in this present
age, we may merit to reach our
heavenly homeland. Through our
Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who
lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for
ever and ever. Amen.

*Patron Saint of stomach and intestinal
disorders.*

Prayer to Saint Luke the Evangelist

O St. Luke, you were chosen to reveal
in preaching and writing God's love
for the poor. Moved by the heavenly
Spirit of Love, you detailed the life of
Jesus, showing His divinity and His
genuine compassion for all human
beings. Help those who already glory
in God's name to persevere in one
heart and one mind and inspire all
people that they may hear the Good
News of Salvation. Amen

*Patron Saint of artists, physicians,
surgeons, students and butchers.*

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this weekend all who are sick, especially
Kit Bing Fan, Tony Keaney, Kathryn Holmes, Therese O'Donoghue,
Stewart Davis, Trevor Stowe, Jerry Donoghue, Margaret Hayes and all those
Parishioners unable to be among us this weekend. For all who have died
recently, especially Rev Monsignor Gerard Diamond, for the casualties of war
in Ukraine, Israel and Gaza and for those whose anniversaries occur about this
time especially Angelina Italiano, Horacio Monzon, Clara Borg, Bien Tenorio,
Eileen Schelleman, John Digby, Lawrence & Catherine McCarthy,
James Battle, Alice Naughtin and Arthur Hall. May they rest in peace.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR THIS WEEK: **Ordinary time ~ Wednesday:**
St Anthony, abbot; **Saturday:** St Fabian, pope, martyr; St Sebastian, martyr;
Saturday Mass of the Virgin Mary. **Masses this weekend:** Preface 1 of the
Sundays in Ordinary Time, Eucharistic Prayer II; Eucharistic Acc. No. II.

SL RITE OF BAPTISM this weekend for Benjamin Huang, son to
Rachel and Adi. Please make them all welcome.

ST DAPHNE AND TREVOR HICKMAN'S Golden Wedding Anniversary was
celebrated recently with their family and friends. It is important for us, their
Parish Family of Families, to also acknowledge their significant milestone as well
and offer them our congratulations, best wishes and thanks for their witness,
love and commitment. You might like to personalise your support when you see
them next.



2024 FOCUS/THEME FOR OUR ONE MISSION TWO PARISHES

Reach out in Love and Mercy: Mark 6: 32 – 34: Year B Sunday Cycle: the Gospel
of Mark Year B is not just the 'Year of Mark': in some ways it's also the Year of
John. The brevity of Mark's Gospel allows for excursions into the Gospel of John
on numerous occasions throughout the year. Year 2 Weekday Cycle.

Year of Prayer – 2024: After the year devoted to reflecting on the documents and
studying the fruits of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Francis has proposed that 2024
should be marked as a year dedicated to prayer. In preparation for the Jubilee,
dioceses are invited to promote initiatives to remind people of the centrality of both
individual prayer and community prayer. One idea might be for "pilgrimages of prayer"
to be organised at a diocesan level – these would be effectively courses or 'schools of
prayer' with monthly or weekly meetings, presided over by the local bishops, but open
to the entire People of God. In addition, to help mark this year more fruitfully, the
Dicastery for Evangelisation will publish a series of "Prayer Notebooks", with material
taken from the many forms of prayer to be found in the rich Catholic tradition.

Daily Prayer

THE NEXT JUBILEE WILL BE IN 2025 and there is great expectation among
the faithful from all over the world. Its importance is also recognized and respected
by other faiths around the world. The last Jubilee was the extraordinary one of 2015
wanted by **Pope Francis**. The one that will take place in 2025 will be the second
with Pope Francis. As many know, the Jubilee is a special year of grace, in which
the Catholic Church offers the faithful the possibility of asking for a **plenary
indulgence**, that is, the remission of sins for themselves or for deceased relatives. A
Jubilee usually lasts a year and a few days: it begins just before the Christian
Christmas and ends the Epiphany of the following year. The most exciting and well-
known rite is certainly the **opening of the Holy Door**. This gate is open only during
the jubilee year and the **4 main ones are the major basilicas of Rome:** St. Peter,
Archbasilica of St John Lateran, St. Paul Outside the Walls and St Mary Major.

A VOCATION VIEW: God is not made manifest in magnificence, but in the
small and the ordinary. Use your talents to manifest God's ever faithful love for
His people. (Is. 60:1-6)

STEWARDSHIP CORNER: "Jesus turned and saw them following him and
said to them, 'What are you looking for?'" *John 1:38* When we recognize who
we are, it's easier to find what we are looking for. Once we see ourselves, and
others, as children of God, we spend less time looking for the material comforts
of the world. Instead, our hearts long for something deeper that can only be
filled by God. Ask God daily how He wants you to live the life He intended for
you. (ST: Weekly First Collection Presbytery Envelopes: \$59; Thanksgiving
Stewardship Envelopes this week: \$125; Vietnamese Donation: \$192.05; SL: Last
week's Church Stewardship Envelopes: \$335; Last week's Presbytery Stewardship
Envelopes: \$322).

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS who have walked
upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the
continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of
Reconciliation.

WEEKEND PARISH MINISTRY ROSTER

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

SATURDAY **6:00 PM SL**
6:00 PM ST
SUNDAY **8:30 AM SL**
10:30 AM ST
5.00PM ST

13 AND 14 JANUARY

Edna Lee
 Volunteer
 Joe Ferlazzo
 Volunteer
 Mai Le & Ha Cao

20 AND 21 JANUARY

Edna Lee
 Volunteer
 Melina Barcellona
 Volunteer
 Hoa Doan & Tuyet Nguyen

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

SATURDAY **6:00 PM SL**
6:00 PM ST
SUNDAY **8:30 AM SL**
10:30 AM ST
5.00PM ST

13 AND 14 JANUARY

Olive Hammill
 Volunteer
 Megan McLean
 Volunteer
 Hoang Nguyen

20 AND 21 JANUARY

Volunteer
 Volunteer
 Kana Chelliah
 Volunteer
 Hung Dinh

SLIDE OPERATORS

SATURDAY **6:00 PM SL**
6:00 PM ST
SUNDAY **8:30 AM SL**
10:30 AM ST
5.00PM ST

13 AND 14 JANUARY

Volunteer
 Michelle Chen
 Volunteer
 Lee Min Yee
 Toan Tran

20 AND 21 JANUARY

Volunteer
 Michelle Chen
 Volunteer
 Manny Gonzales
 Toan Tran

SL WELCOMERS 13/14 JAN

6:00 PM Volunteer
8:30 AM Volunteer
10:30 AM Volunteer
HOSPITALITY

THE BASIC LITURGICAL MINISTRY

SL WELCOMERS 20/21 JAN

6:00 PM Volunteer
9:30 AM Volunteer
10:30 AM Volunteer

SL CHURCH CLEANING

Roster in recess
 for January

ST CHURCH CLEANING

27th Jan. @ 9am
 Hoang Nguyen, Anico Yee,
 Dzung Vu & Trong Nguyen

SL CHURCH FLOWERS

Roster in recess

ST CHURCH FLOWERS

January - Parishioners

ST COUNTERS

This week Team 5:
 Anico Yee & Pabs Gonzales
 Next week Team 6:
 Peggy & Ngery D'Cruz

THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK: Fr Mark De Battista traces the term "Lamb of God" back to Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah. Mother Hilda says that unlike all the sporting replays of player mistakes, God doesn't do replays of our life mistakes. Fr Tony Percy says Jesus' question; what are you seeking, highlights the deepest division that exists between those who are seeking the truth, those who are seeking God, and those who are not seeking the truth and those who are not seeking God. Byron and Francine Pirola explain the difference between liking and loving, and Fr Mike Delaney asks where is God for you? Plus, more great music!

ORDER OF MALTA LOURDES DAY MASS – SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY

2024: For some years now, the Order of Malta has organised an annual Lourdes Day Mass to provide an opportunity to pray for the sick and infirm particularly for those who would not otherwise have the possibility of visiting Lourdes. The Mass will take place again on **Saturday, 10th February at 10.30am at St Patrick's Cathedral**, with Archbishop Peter A Comensoli as the principal celebrant. For further information, please contact: Sauro Antonelli AM on 0411 250 288.

DISPOSAL OF A CAR from a deceased estate, or when a family member has had to relinquish their licence or go into residential care, can be a challenging process. Getting a roadworthy, taking photos to advertise on the internet, cleaning and polishing, taking calls (if they come), even finding a garage until a prospective buyer turns up (if indeed they do!). If you need to dispose of a vehicle from a deceased estate or which is no longer required, could you consider gifting it to the "Lifeboat Foundation", a registered charity with tax deductible status, which for ten years has been providing pastoral and practical support to nearly 150 victims/survivors across Australia of church-related sexual abuse. Many of these suffer Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), have limited or no employment, and a donated vehicle could vastly improve their quality of life and/or generate funds to assist personal, medical and accommodation needs. If you would like to explore the possibility of gifting a potentially suitable vehicle to "Lifeboat", contact Fr. Kevin Dillon (frkdillon@outlook.com.au or 0421 777 360) or Adam Kaali (0411 486 605 or adam-kaali@hotmail.com).

SAFETY STATEMENT: We are committed to a safe and nurturing culture for all children and vulnerable persons in our Church. Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Blackburn South holds the care, safety, wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons as central and fundamental responsibilities of the Church. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

Love and Mercy: Mark 6: 32 – 34

Parish Groups & Contacts

Lectors, Registrars, Collectors,
 Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist,
 Slide Projector Operator & Rosters

ST: Corrie Quimbo 9412 8499

SL: Margaret Gearon 0409 807 135

Baptism Preparation

ST: Mary Italiano 9412 8499

Vietnamese Community

Hoang Nguyen 0422 400 116

Andy Tran 0422 382 109

Vietnamese Youth

John Dinh 0448 977 037

Parish Collection Preparers

ST: Barry Silvester &

Michael Kawalevski

Stewardship Counters

SL: Dale Dixon - 0433 885 087

Steve Kilroe-Smith - 0404 864 232

Parish Pastoral Council

As we are one Mission now, it has been suggested that we require only one Chair?

Parishes Safeguarding Committee

Theresa Nguyen, Mary Italiano,

Darren McLean - 0417 774 504

Janette Clark - 9877 2292

Fr Gerard - 9877 2292

Parish History

SL: Margaret Gearon - 0409 807 135

Whitehorse Deanery - Fr Gerard

Finance Committee

Bernard Negline

Parish Accountant

SL: Hall Hire

Sonya O'Farrell @ the

Parish Office - 9877 2292

Church Sacristan

ST: Margaret King & Hoang Nguyen

SL: Greg Grant - 0401 644 474

Church Housekeeping

ST: Margaret King 9412 8499

Church Cleaning & Flowers

SL: Megan McLean - 0419 347 693

Church Linen

SL: Beryl Kanagalinggam

Parish Garden Maintenance

ST: Des Connors, Leo Watson,

Anico Yee & Vietnamese Community

SL: Darren McLean - 0417 774 504

Holy Communion to the

housebound - Fr Gerard

Parish Choirs

ST: Mary Italiano & Theresa Nguyen

SL: Lina & Maria Mafi

0411 136 043

Parish & School Fete Committee

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

School Advisory Council

ST: Ms. Anne Maree Jones 9878 4188

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

School Parents' Association

ST: Ms. Anne Maree Jones 9878 4188

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

St Vincent de Paul Conference

For Assistance: 1800 305 330

(Freecall: Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)

Parish Contacts:

ST: John McCoy

SL: Tony Lobo &

Steve Kilroe-Smith

Raise your voices ... Entrance Antiphon: All the earth shall bow down before you, O God, and shall sing to you, shall sing to your name, O Most High!

Response to the Psalm: Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! We have found the Messiah: Jesus Christ, who brings us truth and grace. Alleluia!

Eucharistic Acclamation: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.


Communion Antiphon: You have prepared a table before me, and how precious is the chalice that quenches my thirst.




Here is the Lamb of God

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

John the Baptist called Jesus the Lamb of God. In Jesus' time, lambs were often used as sacrifices to please God. Jesus would eventually sacrifice his life for us. What are some sacrifices you can make that could help others?





Following Jesus

Following the example of Jesus' life isn't always easy. For each of the following things that Jesus asks us to do, write down why you find it either easy or difficult to do.

Love your enemies

Be a peace maker


Help people in need

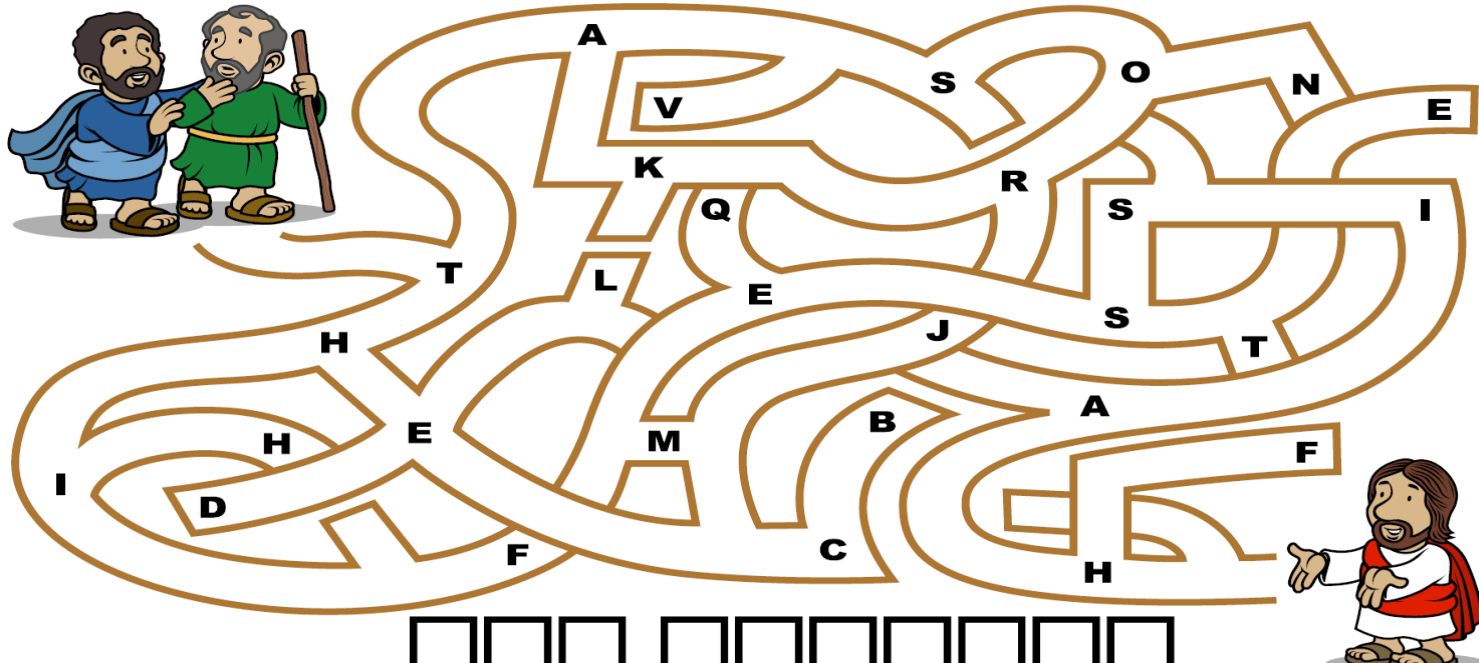
Forgive those who do wrong by you


Be kind to others

Lead others to Christ

As Andrew leads Simon to Jesus, enter each letter into the corresponding box below to reveal who they find.









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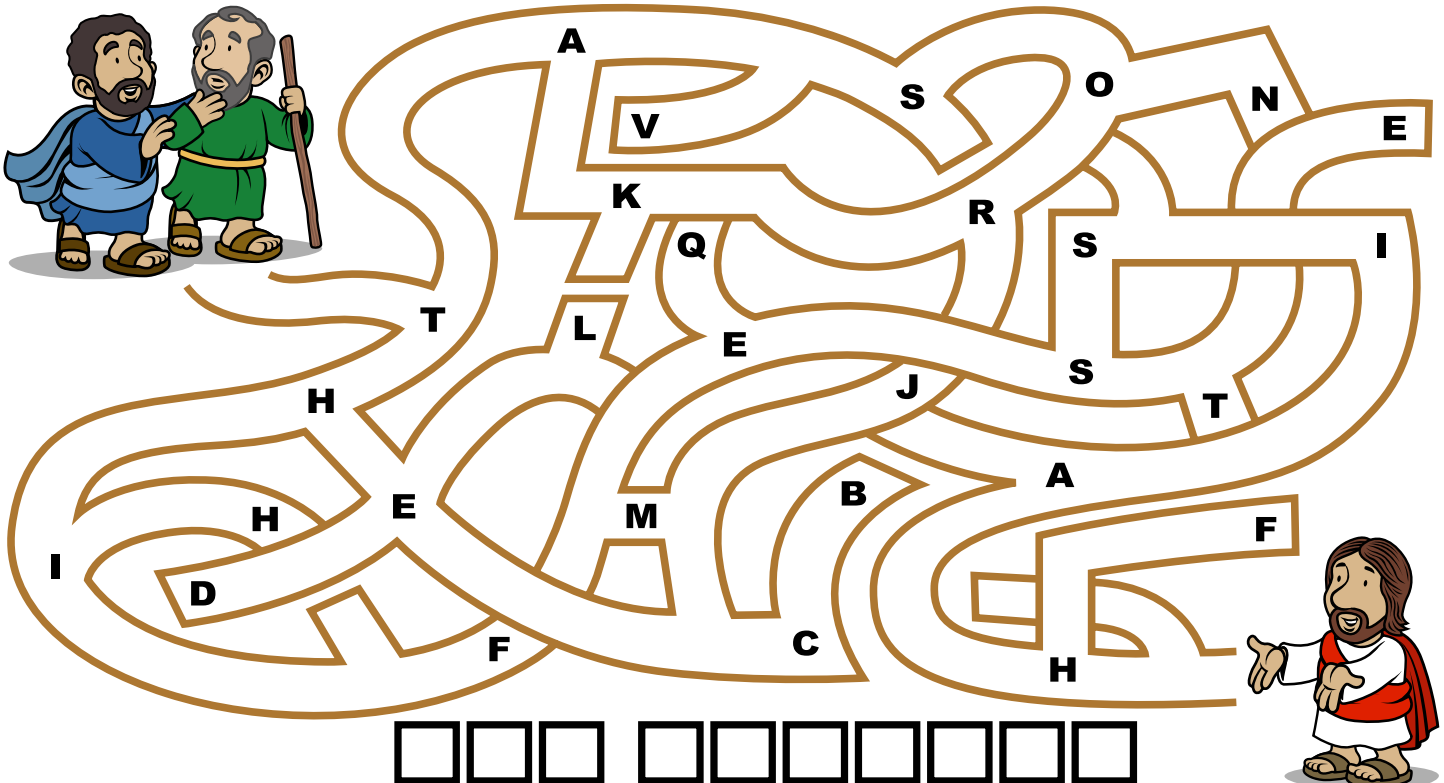
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As Andrew leads Simon to Jesus, enter each letter into the corresponding box below to reveal who they find.



SUNDAY READINGS

READ AT HOME

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year B

14 January 2024



Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
who govern all things,
both in heaven and on earth,
mercifully hear the pleading of your people
and bestow your peace on our times.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Readings and Commentaries

Our Year B journey through Mark's gospel is a little patchy. We heard the opening verses, devoted to the preaching of John the Baptist, on the Second Sunday of Advent several weeks ago. The next few, Mark's account of Jesus' baptism, are naturally allocated to the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The episode after that is the temptations of Jesus, which we always hear about on the Second Sunday of Lent. Finally, because Mark's is the shortest of the gospels, the lectionary makes up for the shortfall with several passages from John. Strangely enough, that means we hear the story of Simon and Andrew's call two Sundays in a row. It's John's version today, next week it's Mark's. Today we also begin a series of five readings from 1 Corinthians chapters 6-11. The first reading and psalm vary from Sunday to Sunday, as they are chosen in combination with the gospel.

A reading from the first book of Samuel

3:3–10, 19

Samuel was lying in the sanctuary of the Lord where the ark of God was, when the Lord called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' He answered, 'Here I am.' Then he ran to Eli and said, 'Here I am, since you called me'. Eli said, 'I did not call. Go back and lie down.' So he went and lay down. Once again the Lord called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, 'Here I am, since you called me.' He replied, 'I did not call you, my son; go back and lie down.' Samuel had as yet no knowledge of the Lord and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. Once again the Lord called, the third time. He got up and went to Eli and said, 'Here I am, since you called me.' Eli then understood that it was the Lord who was calling the boy, and he said to Samuel, 'Go and lie down, and if someone calls say, "Speak Lord, your servant is listening"'. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

The Lord then came and stood by, calling as he had done before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' Samuel answered, 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.'

Samuel grew up and the Lord was with him and let no word of his fall to the ground.

First Reading

In spite of its interesting connection with the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, the story of the prophet Samuel's birth is never told on a Sunday or feast day. That means we don't get to hear his mother Hannah's hymn of praise and thanks (1 Sam 2:1-10) for the gift of her son. It's remarkably similar to Mary's Magnificat. Hannah goes on to match her thanksgiving with action. She offers Samuel for God's service in the shrine at Shiloh where Eli was the priest and the ark of the covenant was housed. Today's reading picks up the story from there. Samuel hears a voice calling him and thinks it is Eli. Only on the third occasion does Eli realise it is the voice of God and advise Samuel to respond with the words, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." The lectionary text leapfrogs over the message that Samuel receives and concludes with the summary statement, "Samuel grew up and the Lord was with him." This brings a similar observation about the young Jesus to mind (Lk 2:52). In addition, Samuel's threefold "Here I am" is taken up in the psalm that follows and in the letter to the Hebrews (10:5-9). The story of Samuel's call is well-crafted. The author invites us to imagine the scene and be drawn into the action as it unfolds. Readers with story-telling skills will readily engage the assembly. The drama grows steadily with each of the three calls. The tension is not fully resolved because we don't hear God's words to Samuel. Instead, we are brought to earth somewhat abruptly by the report of Samuel's advance. Well-delivered, the reading will prepare us for the gospel account of Andrew and Simon Peter's first encounter with Jesus.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 39:2, 4, 7–10

R. Here am I, Lord;
I come to do your will.

I waited, I waited for the Lord
and he stooped down to me;
he heard my cry.

He put a new song into my mouth,
praise of our God. **R.**

You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings,
but an open ear.

You do not ask for holocaust and victim.
Instead, here am I. **R.**

In the scroll of the book it stands written
that I should do your will.

My God, I delight in your law
in the depth of my heart. **R.**

Your justice I have proclaimed
in the great assembly.

My lips I have not sealed;
you know it, O Lord. **R.**

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 39/40 is a fitting match for the story of Samuel's call. The response, "Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will," sets the tone immediately. It draws together Samuel's reply to Eli, "Here I am," and his response to God, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." The psalm as a whole is a pithy blend of themes from the prophets, the wisdom writers and other psalms.

Each of the four stanzas of the responsorial psalm has its own character. The first is rooted in the psalmist's experience of being saved from a desperate situation. God has not only heard and acted on the psalmist's plea, but has added the gift of praise. The second sums up a core teaching of the prophets. Self-offering in obedience to God's word takes priority over the offering of sacrifices. This verse is cited in the letter to the Hebrews (10:5-7) and applied to Christ's self-sacrifice on the cross.

The third stanza echoes Psalm 118/119, the longest of the psalms, in its praise of the Law as God's life-giving word. In the fourth and final stanza, the psalmist makes the bold claim of having testified faithfully before the assembled community.

Right from the start, the assembly is asked to plunge in and make the servant's unequivocal pledge their own. For this to happen the words of the response must be clearly proclaimed. An upward inflection at the end of the first phrase will allow for a pause before the second. Together the two parts form an emphatic declaration. Readers will also need to take care with the five-line first stanza.

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul
to the Corinthians 6:13–15, 17–20**

The body is not meant for fornication; it is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. God who raised the Lord from the dead, will by his power raise us up too.

You know, surely, that your bodies are members making up the body of Christ; anyone who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

Keep away from fornication. All the other sins are committed outside the body; but to fornicate is to sin against your own body. Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you since you received him from God. You are not your own property; you have been bought and paid for. That is why you should use your body for the glory of God.

**A reading from the holy Gospel
according to John 1:35–42**

As John stood with two of his disciples, Jesus passed, and John stared hard at him and said, 'Look, there is the lamb of God.' Hearing this, the two disciples followed Jesus. Jesus turned round, saw them following and said, 'What do you want?' They answered, 'Rabbi,'- which means Teacher - 'where do you live?' 'Come and see' he replied; so they went and saw where he lived, and stayed with him the rest of that day. It was about the tenth hour.

One of these two who became followers of Jesus after hearing what John had said was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Early next morning, Andrew met his brother and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' - which means the Christ - and he took Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked hard at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John; you are to be called Cephas' - meaning Rock.

Second Reading

After the edifying story of Samuel, followed by a devout psalm, it's nothing short of shocking to be confronted with the stern admonition that opens the second reading, "The body is not meant for fornication." Paul will go on to say something quite wonderful – "Your body, you know, is the temple of the Holy Spirit" – but this may not be heard after his moral strictures.

Today's reading is the first of five from chapters 6-11 of 1 Corinthians. We hear from chapters 1-4 in Year A, and on every Easter Sunday there's the option of a few verses from chapter 5. Now, without warning, we are plunged into Paul's severe censure of the community. In passages we never hear he has addressed scandals in the community: an incestuous relationship and recourse to pagan courts to resolve an internal dispute. Today he condemns sexual immorality in the form of fornication with prostitutes (though the explicit reference to prostitutes in v. 16 is omitted).

At first blush, with his references to "spirit" and "Holy Spirit," Paul may seem to be altogether disapproving of the body and of sexual behaviour. This overlooks his repeated recognition of the body. What matters is how the body is used. Paul's point is that it must be "for the glory of God." He wants the Corinthians to understand that together they form the body of Christ in which the Spirit of God dwells. They should live accordingly.

Readers may be tempted to try and soften the bluntness of Paul's language, but this would do the word of God and the assembly a disservice. The reader's task, as always, is to ensure that, whatever the word of the day is, it is proclaimed as faithfully and intelligibly as possible.

Gospel

In the synoptic gospels, Jesus summons the disciples to follow him. John begins with a different perspective. After the Baptist has testified that Jesus is "the lamb of God" and "the Chosen One of God" (1:29.34), two of his disciples are intrigued enough to seek Jesus out and spend time with him. When questioned about what they want, Jesus bids them come and see where he lives. His invitation is like that of Wisdom urging people to come to her house and sup with her (Prov 9:1-6). Jesus will say later than no-one can come to him unless drawn by the Father (6:44).

We learn that one of these two disciples is Andrew. The other remains unidentified. Andrew persuades his brother Simon Peter to come and find Jesus. This leads to reciprocal recognition. Having "dwelt" for a time with Jesus, Andrew declares him to be the Messiah. For his part, Jesus looks hard at Simon (just as the Baptist had stared at Jesus) and names him Cephas or Rock.

The episode is simply told but this belies the wealth of meaning embedded in it. There are titles and names to be unpacked, and its themes of witness, dwelling, truth and wisdom to be explored. It is a thoughtful text with which to commence our way through Ordinary Time.

An alternative translation of the scripture readings is given here from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). This may be particularly useful for those in parishes which use the NRSV Lectionary.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING (NRSV)

A reading from the first book of Samuel

3:3–10, 19

Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord,
where the ark of God was.
Then the Lord called, "Samuel! Samuel!"
and he said, "Here I am!"
Samuel ran to Eli, and said,
"Here I am, for you called me."
But Eli said, "I did not call; lie down again."
So he went and lay down.
The Lord called again, "Samuel!"
Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said,
"Here I am, for you called me."
But he said,
"I did not call, my son; lie down again."
Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord,
and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.
The Lord called Samuel again, a third time.
And he got up and went to Eli, and said,
"Here I am, for you called me."
Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy.
Therefore Eli said to Samuel,
"Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say,
'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'"
So Samuel went and lay down in his place.
Now the Lord came and stood there,
calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!"
And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."
As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him
and let none of his words fall to the ground.

SECOND READING (NRSV)

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians

6:13–15, 17–20

The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord,
and the Lord for the body.
And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power.
Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?
But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.
Shun fornication!
Every sin that a person commits is outside the body;
but the fornicator sins against the body itself.
Or do you not know
that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you,
which you have from God,
and that you are not your own?
For you were bought with a price;
therefore glorify God in your body.

GOSPEL (NRSV)

A reading from the holy gospel according to John 1:35–42

John was standing with two of his disciples,
and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed,
"Look, here is the Lamb of God!"
The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.
When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them,
"What are you looking for?"
They said to him, "Rabbi"
(which translated means Teacher),
"where are you staying?"
He said to them, "Come and see."
They came and saw where he was staying,
and they remained with him that day.
It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.
One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew,
Simon Peter's brother.
He first found his brother Simon and said to him,
"We have found the Messiah"
(which is translated Anointed).
He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said,
"You are Simon son of John.
You are to be called Cephas"
(which is translated Peter).

Concluding Prayer

Blessing for the Beginning of the New Year

May God, the source and origin of all blessing,
grant us grace,
pour out his blessing in abundance,
and keep us safe from harm throughout the year.
Amen.

May he give us integrity in the faith,
endurance in hope,
and perseverance in charity
with holy patience to the end.
Amen.

May he order our days and our deeds in his peace,
grant our prayers in this and in every place,
and lead us happily to eternal life.
Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
come down on us and remain with us for ever.
Amen.

(Adapted from the Solemn Blessing for the Beginning of the Year, Roman Missal p 710)



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Lourdes Day Mass

Saturday 10TH February 2024
at 10:30am
at St Patrick's Cathedral



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