

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (1/17-18/2009)

1 Samuel 3/3-10, 19, Psalm 40, 1 Corinthians 6/13-20, John 1/35-42

A prayer for Inauguration Day: *“O Lord, bless our beautiful land with its wonderful variety of people, of races, cultures and languages. May we be a nation of laughter and joy, of justice and reconciliation, of peace and unity, of compassion, sharing and caring. We pray this prayer for a true patriotism in the name of Jesus the Lord.”*

(“Living With Christ”, New London, CT. 06320)

St. John’s Gospel account today provides us with an abundance of material about the opening days of Jesus’ public ministry.

During this time down by the Jordan River, when Jesus was “prepping” under John the Baptizer’s tutelage, the future apostles first heard their call.

Subsequently, it appears those men returned to their normal life by the Sea of Galilee, where they would once again meet Jesus and respond totally to his invitation.

It was it would seem a step-by-step process.

In the first reading, we have a fascinating story of a prophetic invitation in which a young boy named Samuel also receives a step-by-step call from the Lord.

The boy and his mentor, Eli, need time to sort it all out.

The point is that God’s invitation for us to follow his Son may also be a life-long process.

The first indication of discipleship occurs at our Baptism when we are re-born into the very life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

If we are baptized as infants, our parents and God-parents are charged with the responsibility of seeing that THE CALL bears fruit.

They are to teach us how to love God, ourselves and our neighbors.

As we grow and mature, the responsibility of answering the call becomes ours and ours alone, though a lot of people contribute to our lives along the way.

What is that saying: It takes a village to raise a child?

Maybe it also takes a village to form a disciple.

In the end, however, each of us stands before the Lord alone, accounting for our thoughts, words and deeds to the ever just and merciful God.

We will have nothing to recommend us but our record of response to the grace God has bestowed upon us.

How will we have lived out our identification with Jesus?

How will our lives have reflected our initial call to discipleship?

As his tutor, the priest advised the boy, Samuel, *“If you are called, reply, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.’”*

The high priest’s advice prepares the youngster for the divine call.

May those words be on all of our lips.

Throughout this New Year of 2009, may we all take upon ourselves the obligation to listen better to the Lord – and to one another.

Listening involves shutting up (or down) and being open to what the other is saying, not only to the words, but to all the nuances and music that surround those words.

So be still, brothers and sisters, and listen up!