

2nd SUNDAY YEAR B :2021
THE GREAT ENCOUNTER

After the great day of the Birth of our Savior, there followed different feast days and solemnities. We had the Holy Family putting our families under the protection of the Holy Family, especially during this challenging period in society. We had the New Year, putting ourselves under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, amid the fears, panic, joys, and anxieties of this year. Epiphany followed with the manifestation of Jesus to the world then followed the Baptism of our Lord. Today we reflect on an important theme in our human and Christian way of life ***the great encounter, the calling***. This starts off the ordinary season of the year.

It is the ***commissioning, the call to discipleship***. The first reading from the book of Samuel talks of the call of young Samuel to be a prophet of God. He was called directly by God and his response was so prompt once he realized it was God calling him, "***Here I am Lord I have heard you calling.***" God calls us in different ways and at different times according to His will and according to the need. Most of the time we have been brought to God through other people, this is clearly seen in the Gospel.

It is Andrew who brought his brother Peter to Jesus, "***We have found the Messiah.***" Perhaps we were BAPTIZED as infants thus being brought to the church by somebody else, perhaps we underwent Catechetical instruction through somebody else. We went through the RCIA under the guidance of others. Most of the time we are encouraged to follow Jesus fully and totally by others. There was an Andrew in our journey of faith and we in turn are called to be an Andrew to someone else. How are you doing it in the present-day society when a lot of Andrews are needed to bring others to Christ?

This is our mission as we start off this Liturgical Year. This is the dignity of discipleship. Jesus sees more than meets the eye in all of us. He sees our potentiality and what we can and are able to accomplish as he saw in Simon Peter. Not what we are, but what we can be. The Lord looks to us today to cultivate our potentiality through **parents, teachers, Religious, and friends. How are we responding to these people of good will?** These are the Andrews of our time. We are called to witness Christ in this volatile period in our society.

- A society whereby the dignity of human life has lost value.
- A society where morality, sanctity, and the value of life is questionable and loosing meaning.
- A society where the gift of sexuality has been reduced and devalued to an object of humor, discussion, gossip, entertainment, movies, the media, and advertisements thus loosing that dignity of sexuality.
- A Society where sexual liberation is stressed.
- A Society where the emphasis is not on the value of sexuality thus leaving families in chaos and brokenness.

Today we must make a choice as we listen to the call of discipleship. This is the call of St. Paul to the Corinthians, talking about the **dignity of the Body**. He is teaching us about the sanctity of sexuality that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirt. He is teaching us **sexual responsibility, integrity, and accountability. The value of sexuality in marriage is being stressed** so much by St. Paul.

We must note the fact that sexual expression of love outside marriage is irresponsible and wrong. This is what he is referring to. It should be noted that it is an illusion to think of sex without responsibility. Commitment is the key to happiness. Our bodies are more than biological units, rather ***they are Temples of the Holy Spirit.*** We are called to be firm like St. Paul This is discipleship.

The value of our vocation is brought to our attention and a response is expected. Are you valuing your vocation today, your vocation to the married life, the single life, or to Religious life? How do you witness Christ in today's world? We are called to live in the image of God despite our human weakness.

I ASK YOU TO BE AN ANDREW TO SOMEBODY THIS WEEK!