

1 Sm 3: 3b-10. 19/

Ps 40: 2. 4. 7-8. 8-9. 10 (8a. 9a)

1 Cor 6: 13c-15a. 17-20

Gospel JN 1:35-42

John was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him and 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 you will see."

So they went and saw where Jesus was staying, and they stayed with him that day. It was about four in the afternoon. Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus. He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah" which is translated Christ "Then he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas" which is translated Peter.

Discipleship

Today's Gospel introduces the first disciples of Jesus- John and Andrew from the fishermen folk. We often hear that Jesus took ordinary, uneducated fishermen as his disciples. It's true they were fishermen. But they were not ordinary folk. They were the disciples of the strict master John the Baptist. John was a great ascetic and naturally his disciples also must have followed his way. He came to prepare the way for Jesus and his preaching was, "Every valley shall be filled and every hill shall be brought low, crooked shall be made straight and rough ways shall be made smooth." John had filled the valley and lowered the hill in his disciples; he had straightened their crookedness and smoothed their rough ways. Only when this rigorous training was over, they were ready to be the disciples of the Great Master about whom John had said that he is not worthy to untie his sandals. Only after preparing their hearts John sends them to Jesus.

Seeing them following, Jesus asks them, "What do you seek?" It is said that whenever man takes one step towards God he takes seven steps and comes down to man. Seven is the symbol of perfection. But, the first step should be yours. It was the experience of Zacchaeus. This was the story of sinner woman who sat at his feet crying and anointed his feet. This was the story of the blind man. All of them were accepted. When we take God seriously God also takes us seriously.

What do you seek? Every seeking, every journey needs a clear vision of destination. What do we really seek? A Sufi story is told about a man who went in search of God. He wandered the whole world and finally reached at the doorsteps of God. Suddenly he thought if God asks anything what shall I reply? He took off his shoes and started walking back without making any sound, worried, if God hears his footsteps and comes out what shall I do? Many seek God for temporary benefits. Jesus said to the crowd who came searching him after the multiplication of bread "I say to you, you seek me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."

We need to meditate “ what do we seek? Jesus gets a beautiful reply from John and Andrew. “We want to see where you are staying.” And Jesus says to them, “Come and see” They stayed with him. Before staying with Jesus they called him “Rabbi”, but after staying with Jesus they said, “We have found the Messiah” They were not just seeing his residence, they experienced the truth. The invitation to come and see was an invitation to enter into the experience of Jesus.

At another time one young man asks him the same question and Jesus tells him, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head.” But the young man was not ready to enter into that experience.

Seeing where one lives is seeing the truth of the person, his personal integrity. It is the home- life test. One theologian came to give a lecture on social justice. Emphatically he said, “God is with the poor” and “God is not with the rich.” At question time a listener asked, “You spoke very well, but I hear that you are very rich and you own four houses in different parts of the country. Which side you are really on?” His speech is very inspiring, but failed in the home-life test.

Once I asked a group of young people from Jesus youth movement the question, “What inspired you to dedicate yourselves to this work?” “Our parish priest” was their reply. They explained that after the bible discussion in the evenings they see their parish priest going to the church and they said, “In the morning when we come to church we see him kneeling before the altar. He is always with Jesus.”

In the case of Jesus, his life did not betray his words. It was precisely his life that made John and Andrew say, “We saw Messiah”

John and Andrew teaches us a way we can test others, and also how to test ourselves, the sincerity of our intentions, the honesty of our being.