



## Second Sunday of Ordinary Time, Cycle B

Sunday, January 17, 2021

### Readings & Background

**First Reading:** 1 Samuel 3:3b–10,19

The Lord calls Samuel.

**Responsorial Psalm :** Psalm 40:2, 4, 7–8, 8–9, 10

A prayer of commitment to follow the will of the Lord.

**Second Reading** 1 Corinthians 6:13c–15a,17–20

Paul reminds the Corinthians that their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit.

**Gospel Reading: John 1:35–42**

John the Baptist recognizes Jesus as the Lamb of God, and Jesus receives his first followers.

### Background on the Gospel Reading

*Although the liturgical season of Ordinary Time begins this week, today's reading continues with the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, which concludes the Christmas season.*

Today's reading from the Gospel according to John immediately follows John the Baptist's testimony about Jesus and his identification of Jesus as the Lamb of God. Having been baptized by John, Jesus begins to gather followers. The first followers sought out Jesus because of the testimony and witness of John the



Baptist.

We are familiar with the title that **John the Baptist uses for Jesus—the Lamb of God**. We hear it weekly at the fraction rite during Mass. For those who heard John the Baptist, however, this title recalled key themes from the Old Testament. It **alludes to the paschal lamb offered as a sacrifice when God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, the event that is commemorated by the Jewish Passover celebration**. The designation also recalls the prophet Isaiah's description of the suffering servant of Israel. In using this name for Jesus, John the Baptist predicts Jesus' passion and death and the new interpretation of Passover that will begin with Jesus' Last Supper.

We learn in today's reading how Jesus' first followers were gathered. The first two, Andrew and another man, were followers of John the Baptist. After hearing John's testimony, they became followers of Jesus. During their time with Jesus, the details of which are not specified, Andrew and the other follower came to believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Andrew then brings his brother, Simon, to Jesus. Immediately, Jesus gave Simon a new name, calling him Peter, which means "rock" in Greek. The renaming of Simon to Peter is reported in all four of the Gospels.

In the exchange between Andrew, the other disciple, and Jesus, we see an example of the usual pattern for first-century Jewish rabbinical schools. Jews sought out rabbis and established themselves as disciples of a particular rabbi. **Jesus appears to have been unique in that he sought out individuals, inviting them to be his followers**. In the passage that follows, John's Gospel tells us how Jesus took the initiative in calling Philip and Nathanael.

**Jesus asks Andrew and the other disciple, "What are you looking for?"** This is a telling question, and one that we might often ask of ourselves. John the Baptist testified to Jesus' identity, the Lamb of God, using the framework of the Old Testament. **Andrew, Simon, and the other first disciples were looking for the Messiah, whom they also came to know as the Son of God**. What do we look for and what do we find in Jesus?

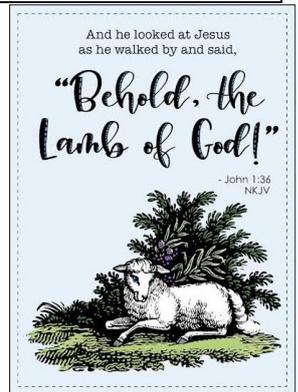
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**Making the Connection (Grades 1, 2, and 3)**

Our faith in Jesus is based upon the witness of others and our own relationship with Jesus that is developed through our life of prayer. Young children learn about Jesus from others, but their growth in faith is also based upon their personal prayer and spirituality.

**Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings**

1. Begin by inviting the children to join a club. Tell them one thing that would be good about the club. (Example: It will meet in a tree house.)  
***Who wants to come? If you want to join, you must say one more thing that you think would be good about our club.***
2. After a volunteer tells one thing, he or she should ask if someone else would like to join. The next volunteer must also say one thing that would be good about the club. After several children have taken turns, say: ***The Gospel this week tells us that people wanted to follow Jesus because they had heard from others how special he was.*** Read today's Gospel, John 1:35-42.
3. ***Who does the Gospel say was first to tell people about Jesus?*** (John the Baptist) ***Who was next?*** (Andrew and another disciple) ***Who did Andrew tell about Jesus?*** (his brother, Simon)
4. ***The first disciples wanted to follow Jesus because they had gotten to know him. The more we learn about Jesus, the more we want to follow him. That is why we pray and go to Mass and gather for religious education.***
5. Conclude in prayer together that we will continue to know Jesus better and to follow him always. Pray together the [Glory Be to the Father](#).



**Making the Connection (Grades 4, 5, and 6)**

Faith development typically begins with the acceptance of the words and witness of others. The development later progresses to an appropriation and experience of faith that is more fully one's own. At every stage of faith, however, we seek and find Jesus with the community of believers, the Church.

**Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings**

1. Ask the group to imagine that they are seeking information about a sports team or a club that they wish to join. Ask: ***What are some things that you could do to find out if this particular sport or club is something you want to be a part of?*** (Read information about the team or club, research what other people or organizations report about the team or club, talk to other people who have been part of the team in the past or who have been members of the club, or talk to current members.) Discuss which method of information gathering would be the most persuasive and helpful to our decision making.
2. ***All the ideas you named would be helpful in providing the information you need. But the experiences of other people are often more persuasive than other forms of information. Advertisements are good examples of ways in which information is provided by presenting the experiences that people have had with a particular product. In today's Gospel, we learn how Jesus' first disciples learned about Jesus. Let's listen carefully.***
3. Invite one or more volunteers to read aloud today's Gospel, John 1:35-42.
4. ***Who does the Gospel say was the first to tell people about Jesus?*** (John the Baptist) ***Who was next?*** (Andrew and another disciple) ***Whom did Andrew tell?*** (his brother, Simon) ***The first community of Jesus' disciples learned about Jesus from other people. When these people came to Jesus, they learned for themselves who Jesus was, and then they wanted to be his followers.***
5. ***This is one of the most important aspects of our faith. No one is a disciple of Jesus alone. To be a follower of Jesus is to be part of a community of disciples. Today we call that community the Church.***
6. Conclude in prayer together that the Church will continue to witness to others all that we have learned about Jesus. Pray together the [Apostles' Creed](#).

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**Making the Connection (Grades 7 and 8)**

Young people first learn about Jesus through the witness of others in the community of faith. We can foster continued growth in faith by encouraging each of them to nurture a personal relationship with Christ through prayer and the celebration of the sacraments.

**Preparation for Sunday Scripture Readings**

1. Ask the young people to follow these directions as they consider their preferred option in the following situations:
2. Raise your right hand if you like hearing a friend describe a movie; raise your left hand if you would rather go to see the movie yourself.
3. Fold your arms if you enjoy reading about concerts performed by your favourite musical artists; wave your hands in the air if you would prefer to go to the concert yourself.
4. Stay seated if you like to read about the latest video games; stand up if you would rather play these games yourself.
5. **Hearing or reading about others' experiences can be helpful. However, we prefer to participate in our favourite activities and want to experience them first-hand.**
6. Say: **In this Sunday's Gospel, we see how Jesus' disciples learned about Jesus from others, but then got to know Jesus for themselves. Let's listen carefully to this Gospel.**
7. Invite one or more volunteers to read aloud John 1:35–42.
1. **From whom did the disciples first learn about Jesus?** (John the Baptist) **What did John the Baptist call Jesus?** (the Lamb of God) **What did Jesus say when the disciples asked him where he was staying?** ("Come, and you will see.") Observe that Jesus answered the disciples' question by extending an invitation to them so that they could come to know him first-hand.
2. **What did Andrew do after spending the day with Jesus?** (He told his brother Simon about Jesus.) **Then what happened?** (Andrew brought Simon to Jesus.) Say: **It wasn't enough for Andrew to tell Simon about Jesus. Andrew wanted Simon to have a first-hand experience of Jesus as well. The disciples became followers of Jesus because they wanted to know him even better.**
3. **Like the disciples, we first learn about Jesus from others. We get to know Jesus by developing a relationship with him. How can we do this?** (through prayer, by celebrating the sacraments) **The better we know Jesus, the more we want to follow him.**
4. Conclude with a prayer asking God to help each person know Jesus better and follow him always. Pray together the psalm for this Sunday, Psalm 40.

**Family Connection**

In today's Gospel we learn about one of at least two-family relations that appear among Jesus' first disciples. **Andrew is the brother of Simon, whom Jesus renames Peter.** In next week's Gospel, we will learn about the **brothers James and John, the sons of Zebedee.** We know from the letters of Paul and other witnesses to the early Church that it was **a common occurrence for an entire household to be baptized together.** From the very beginning of the Church, **families helped one another to know and follow Jesus.**

**We hope and pray that this continues to be true in our family life.**

Before your family gathers, look around your house and **gather some items that your family might have that remind you of your faith.** Perhaps you have a cross or crucifix displayed in your home, a statue of Mary, or statues or other art depicting saints.

In today's Gospel we learn about how Andrew led his brother, Simon, to Jesus.

**Read today's Gospel, John 1:35-42.**

**In our family life, we also help to lead one another to Jesus.** Talk together about the items that you gathered, discussing what these items mean to you and how you might use them during the day for prayer. Pray that your family will continue to help one another grow in our faith in Jesus.

**Pray together the [Glory Be to the Father](#).**

