

Reflection on the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Cycle B):

Theme: "The Call"

Test: 1 Samuel 3:3-10,19

When God called Samuel, it was a direct conversation. And his life changed forever because he listened and he became a great prophet. Samuel means "one who listens".

With the advancement of technology, with the cell phone, voice mail, e-mail, pagers and fax machines, I wonder if God still speaks to us today like He spoke to Samuel. If so, how could we learn to listen? Three things to reflect:

First, to hear the call of God we need to have a quiet moment to listen. Before going to bed and in waking up do we have quiet moment? Some of us are never quiet. We surround ourselves by sound all of the time. When we crank the car we turn on the radio. When we enter our home, we turn on the TV. And some of us cannot even sleep without music playing. When can we have a quiet moment? It is only in a quiet time in ourselves that we can hear God's calling.

Second, to hear the call of God we need spiritual guides. Samuel at first did not recognize the call of God. He thought the voice in his head was that of his teacher Eli. But Eli explained to Samuel, Eli was the spiritual mentor for Samuel who helped him interpret God's call. We need a spiritual mentor to help us discern God's call. Wise counsel is helpful in times like this.

Third, when God does call, we must have courage. For the call of God may radically change the direction of our lives. A single call may change a life. For instance, a parent gets the telephone call in the middle of the night telling them that their child is in the hospital emergency room following an accident. Suddenly, life is turned upside down. When Samuel listened, and responded to God's call his life had changed. He became the great prophet. He anointed King Saul as the first king of Israel and later he anointed King David. He had a great influence over the religious and political climate not only during his time but also for centuries.

What is God calling you and me to do and to become? Is God calling us for service in the priesthood, religious life or in the diaconate life? Is God calling us to do some community services, such as feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, and so and so forth? God may have a better plan for our abundance than our savings plan. He may have a bolder use of our skills than we have planned.

So here's the question. If God calls, would we be listening? And if we are listening, would we know whom to ask as spiritual guide to help us interpret that call? And if we hear the call of God on our lives, would we be willing to answer as young Samuel did? Could we say, "Speak Lord, for your servant is listening."? There is no greater compliment than to listen.

Fr. Charito Suan

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

When can a priest avail of a sabbatical?

Answer: After ten years of service in the Archdiocese, a priest is entitled to take 6 months sabbatical, five months for studies and a month for a retreat. I had that last year, 2017.

Are priests allowed to take vacation? How many times a year?

Answer: Yes, priests are entitled to have a vacation. One month in a year, one week after Christmas and one week after Easter. I use my Christmas and Easter for my pilgrimages: Rome, Lourdes, Fatima, and the Holy Land.

Why January for my vacation?

Answers:

First: After the hectic schedule and busy activities from the time of Thanksgiving, Advent, the Nine Novena Masses before Christmas (Simbang Gabi), Christmas Season and New Year, it's time for me to catch my breath, to be with my Family in the Philippines.

Second. It's a time for our family reunion, and a special memorial mass for my dad in the cemetery. Ever since, we've been doing our family reunion in January, more so now that my mom is unable to walk anymore.

Third, To attend the Feast of the "Sto Nino de Cebu" which is celebrated on the 3rd week of January and it is also my devotion. Why the Sto Nino" or "Infant Jesus" become my great devotion? Because when I left the seminary for good, I was planning for my own future. I had a good job. But after two years working and having a passion in law school, everything had changed. I heard a voice in my head telling me to go back to the Seminary. But I never listened. I blocked it and I even protested. "No way, I'm not going back." Every day I was seeking for guidance. I talked to the priest for spiritual direction. His advised to me was to listen and discern. He said: "you have your own plan but God has a better plan for you". But still I was stubborn. Every day I went to the Sto. Nino Shrine to spend quiet time praying for enlightenment.... Finally, I challenged God to give me a sign that I would believe, He really called me. Honestly, he gave me not only one sign but many. When I returned back to the seminary, although there was no room for me because I was late for a week and the seminary was full, but with the grace of God the Rector (head of the Seminary) accepted me with the condition that I could cope with the lessons and stay in a small room with no electric fan. I survived and in 1985, I was ordained priest. Until now I would never miss going to the Sto. Nino Shrine in Cebu. I'm leaving this Monday Jan.15 and be back Feb.13, before Ash Wednesday. Feb. 14 is Ash Wednesday which is also Valentine's Day.

When I'm gone Fr. Peri Moses will be around and he'll be staying with us for six months for he'll be finishing his doctorate.

Let us also welcome Fr. Peri Moses.

May this year bring us all the blessings we need.

Fr. Charito Suan

Mass Intentions

Monday	January 15
8:00 am	
Tuesday	January 16
8:00 am	† Paula Clow
Wednesday	January 17
7:00 pm	
Thursday	January 18
8:00 am	† Paul and † Theresa Vella
Friday	January 19
8:00 am	† Maria Ibarra
Saturday	January 20
8:00 am	
4:30 pm	† Nora and † Camillo Borghello
Sunday	January 21
7:30 am	People of the Parish
	† Ines B. Martin
9:30 am	† Carmen and † Rufino Lazo
11:30 am	Santo Niño

† Denotes deceased – (L) Living

Please note, as being agreed upon by the Parish Staff and the Parish Pastoral Council (Parish Support Group), beginning January 2018, there will no longer be a 5:30 pm evening mass. On Wednesday only, there will no longer be a mass at 8am, but a communal service, officiated by a Deacon. On Wednesday evening we have a novena mass in honor of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. You cordially invited to join the novena mass.

Sunday Collection January 14 ,2017

Weekly Need:	\$ 5,000.00
Sunday Collection	\$ 4,112.00
Over/Under	\$ 888.00
Religious Education	\$ 854.00

If you make your offertory donation by check, without using parishioner envelopes, it would be most helpful if you placed your parishioner/envelope # in the "memo" section of the check.

This helps us input your donation to the offertory data system. **We will not be responsible for donations not credited due to missing envelope numbers (or not having a Sunday collection envelope.)**

ST. ELIZABETH MALTESE SOCIETY THIRTY FOURTH ANNUAL ST. PAUL OF THE SHIPWRECK FESTA

SATURDAY-FEBRUARY 3, 2018

MASS: 4:30 pm

ST. ELIZABETH CHURCH

Dinner: 6:00 pm in Cantwell Hall

Menu: New York Strip, Salad,

Mostaccioli, Wine and Dessert

Wayland and Goettingen Streets, San Francisco

ADULTS: \$35.00

CHILDREN: (12 and under) \$15.00

For Tickets Call:

John Sant	415-467-1413
Tony Sammut	415-467-1686
Carmen Micallef	415-586-2597
Frances Cairns	415-468-8636
Josie Ghiglieri	415-333-5290

On Saturday , **January 20th** Devotion to the Two Hearts -1000 Hail Mary's and Divine Mercy will be recited after the 8:00 am Mass until 3:30 pm in the Rectory Chapel. Everyone is invited to attend. (Your attendance for any length of time will be welcome.)

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

Santo Niño de Cebu Association International cordially invites you to join its Golden Anniversary Fiesta with a Concelebrated Mass on Sunday, January 21, 2018 at 11:30 a.m. in our Parish, St. Elizabeth Church. Most Reverend William J. Justice is the Main Celebrant. Reception will follow after the mass at the Parish Cantwell Hall.

The Parish office will be closed on Monday **January 15th** in obervance of Marthin Luther King Jr. holiday.

Please remember that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass does not apply to those who are ill. It is a sign of consideration for others that those with flu like symptoms remain at home.