

Prepare with Prayer

*You bless all of those
who trust you, LORD,
and refuse to worship idols
or follow false gods.
You, LORD God, have done
many wonderful things,
and you have planned
marvelous things for us.*
Psalm 40:4-5

Today's Readings

1 Samuel 3:4-10, 19
Psalm 40:1, 5ab, 8, 11
John 1:35-42

*God wants to speak with each of us,
but are we listening?*

Scripture Background

Young Samuel lived in a time before the Israelites were one unified nation under a single king. They were, instead, twelve loosely related tribes occupying the land to which Moses had led them some 200 years earlier. (Think of modern-day Afghanistan with its scattered population of semi-independent tribes ruled by local warlords.)

The center of worship was not Jerusalem but Shiloh, where the long-suffering Eli and his corrupt sons served as priests.

To fulfill a vow made by his mother before his birth, Samuel had lived in the house of Eli from the age of three. Essentially, he had grown up in the Lord's service. (See 1 Samuel 1.)


The night he received his call to be a prophet of God and leader of the people, Samuel was sleeping in a place where the ark of the covenant was kept. The ark contained the stone tablets given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Scholars are not sure if, at this time, the Israelites worshiped in a temple or if they were still worshiping in a meeting tent.

The youth's night duty probably included guarding the ark and keeping a sanctuary light burning near it, as decreed by the law of Moses. (We observe a similar law today in our churches by keeping a lit sanctuary candle near the tabernacle that houses the Blessed Sacrament.)

The Gospel story about Andrew's call is fairly straightforward and needs little comment. Note, however, God's use of ordinary human interaction to gather disciples around our Lord. First, John the Baptist had told his disciple Andrew about Jesus, then Andrew told his brother Simon. Isn't that how most of us come to faith, through the trusted word of somebody we know?

St. Andrew the First-called

Because of an early tradition identifying Andrew as the first apostle to become a follower of Jesus, Eastern Christians to this day honor him as "St. Andrew the First-called." According to another tradition that dates back to Eusebius, third-century bishop of Caesarea, Andrew's missionary travels took him as far as the shores of the Black Sea and along Russia's Dnieper River. From earliest times, therefore, Russian Christians have claimed Andrew as their nation's patron saint.

 The type of crucifix adopted by the Russian Orthodox Church proclaims the nation's continuing devotion to their *Svetoi Andrei*. The slanted bar near the bottom of the crucifix represents the X-shaped cross on which, according to legend, Andrew was martyred. His death came while preaching the good news in the Roman province of Achaia, home of the cities of Athens and Corinth.

Relationship to Children

Year in and year out, one rule never changed at a girls' summer camp run by the Sisters of St. Agnes in the scenic Wisconsin woods: *No radios*. Their thinking was that for one week of the year, God deserved a chance to speak to the girls through the beauty of nature, without any outside competition.

This Week's Preparation

In the worship area, on a table covered with a green cloth, place:

- a lectionary
- a candle
- optional: an illustration of Andrew the apostle (available online by searching the phrase "St. Andrew images")

Have ready for Gathering

- a timing device (egg timer, wristwatch or clock with a second hand, or a cell phone with a timer)

For similar reasons, you are encouraged to tell children to build silence into their daily routines. Suggest that sometimes they go to their rooms, lie flat on their backs, breathe deeply, and silently repeat with the rhythm of their breathing the words of Samuel, "I'm listening, Lord. What do you want me to do?" Besides being a good way to pray, this can help an angry or upset child to calm down.

"Obey your elders" is childhood advice as old as the fourth commandment. Nevertheless, no child should obey an adult who wants him or her to do something wrong. You may wish to stress this point when discussing with children the voice of God in other people. If an adult ever says something that conflicts with what a child feels inside to be right, that child should always trust her or his own inner voice.

Children's Leaflet

Families will be surprised at what they hear when they listen to silence in this week's activity. The children's word game highlights how we best listen to God.

Music

See page 62 for more information.

Gathering: "Follow Me" by Anna Vagle

Psalm: "Psalm 40: Here Am I" by Robert Piercy (*Singing Our Faith*, GIA)

Gospel Acclamation: "Alleluia" by Steve Angrisano

With their ears, the disciples heard John say, "There is the Lamb of God." With their hearts, they heard God say to follow Jesus. How does God speak to you? Add, subtract, or change a letter from the underlined word to create the next missing word.

God wants to speak to you, because you are very d e a r to God.
Are you listening?

God is not far away, God is N E A R to you
each and every day of the Y E A R.

You can H E A R sounds and noises with one E A R
or with both E A R S, but the "ear" that listens to God
and H E A R S God
is really your H E A R T!

God speaks to you with love.
Are you listening?

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Order of worship

Gathering

When the Gathering song is ended, invite the children to be seated. Tell them you are going to give them one minute to spend in complete silence. During that time, they are to listen to all the different sounds around them. When the time is up, ask the children to name the sounds they heard.

Explain that each sound they identified is a little like the voice of God. Make a few comparisons using sounds the children mentioned: God's voice is powerful, like the sound of a car motor; God's voice is gentle, like the sound of your own breathing; God's voice sometimes is annoying, like the sound of a bad cough, etc.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us bow our heads for prayer. Please repeat the words, "Open my ears, Lord," each time you hear me say them.

Children: Open my ears, Lord.

Leader: Whenever you speak to me in quiet times, open my ears, Lord.

Children: Open my ears, Lord.

Leader: Whenever you speak to me through good words from good people, open my ears, Lord.

Children: Open my ears, Lord.

Leader: Whenever you speak to me in the words of the Bible, open my ears, Lord.

Children: Open my ears, Lord.

Leader: Lord, sometimes you speak to us in the silence of our own hearts. Sometimes you speak to us through the good words of good people. *Always* you speak to us through the words of sacred Scripture. We promise to listen carefully as you speak to us now, through Christ our Lord.

Children: Amen.

Light the candle and begin the First Reading.

First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:4-10, 19

Leader: In today's First Reading you will meet Eli and Samuel. Eli was an old, half-blind priest in the city

of Shiloh, and Samuel was his young helper. Listen to what happened one night while Samuel was keeping watch in God's house.

At the end of the reading:

Leader: The word of the Lord

Children: Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 40:1, 3ab, 8, 11

The Psalm may be either sung or spoken. Before beginning the Psalm, sing or announce the response. (If using a sung response, see Music.)

Leader: Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

Children: Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.

Gospel Acclamation

Invite the children to stand. Sing the suggested Acclamation or another familiar one. If you choose not to sing the Acclamation, proceed to the Proclamation of the Gospel.

Proclaim the Gospel: John 1:35-42

Leader: That night in the Lord's house, Samuel was called to be a prophet of God and a leader of the people. In today's Gospel, we are going to hear the story of how Andrew received his call to be a disciple of Jesus.

Leader: The Lord be with you.

Children: And with your spirit.

Leader: A reading from the Gospel of John.

Children: † Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end of the reading:

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

Children: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

Tell the children you are going to share a few ideas on how God speaks with people. Then base a Homily on these ideas and questions:

- God spoke to Samuel in the silence of the night.
 - Samuel's story teaches us how important it is sometimes to be silent, without any loud music or TV shows blocking out God's voice.



- When are the quiet times in *your* day?

• God spoke to Andrew through another human being: John the Baptist.

- What did John tell Andrew when Jesus walked by? (“Here is the Lamb of God!”)

- “Lamb of God” meant that Jesus was the Messiah. Like an innocent lamb, he was ready to offer his life for his people.

- This story teaches us how important it is to pay attention to the words of people around us.

- Whenever good people tell us to do good things, God is speaking through them.

- We should *never* listen to people who tell us to think or do bad things.

• God also spoke to Andrew through the Lord Jesus.

- What did Jesus ask Andrew and his friend? (“What do you want?”) How did they answer? (“Rabbi, where do you live?”)

- Jesus then took the men home with him, and that’s how Andrew became a disciple.

- This story teaches us how important it is to pay attention to the words of Jesus. We hear his words in the Gospels. Do you pay close attention to the Gospel when it is read at Mass?

- At home, do you read stories or watch videos about Jesus?

• What, then, are three ways you can listen to God?

- Spend some time every day in silence.

- Listen when good people tell you good things.

- Listen to the words of Jesus in the Gospels.

Profession of Faith

Leader: Please stand for our Profession of Faith and repeat, “This I do believe” each time I say it.

Children: This I do believe.

Leader: God is a loving parent who speaks to us every day. This I do believe.

Children: This I do believe.

Leader: Jesus is God’s Son, whose words show us the way to life everlasting. This I do believe.

Children: This I do believe.

Leader: The Holy Spirit is God’s own Spirit, who speaks to us in the silence of our hearts. This I do believe.

Children: This I do believe.

Leader: The holy, catholic Church is built on the word of God. This I do believe.

Children: This I do believe.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: Knowing that God will hear our prayers, let us pray in confidence for all that we need. To each petition, please respond, “Lord, hear our prayer.”

Children: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: That the leaders of our Church will lead people to Jesus, just as John the Baptist did, let us pray to the Lord.

Children: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: That the people of our parish will answer the call of Jesus, just as Andrew did, let us pray to the Lord.

Children: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: That the leaders of our town and country will do what God wants, just as Samuel did, let us pray to the Lord.

Children: Lord, hear our prayer.

Invite the children to add their own petitions.

Leader: Loving God, we know you hear and answer us whenever we call upon you. With the help of your Holy Spirit, may we hear and answer you, too, whenever *you* call upon *us*. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

Children: Amen.

Return to Assembly

The Liturgy of the Word ends with the Prayer of the Faithful. Prepare the children to return to the assembly in a respectful manner. Remind them to take a leaflet home and share it with their families.

60B SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING

1 Samuel 3:4-10, 19 Speak, O Lord, your servant is listening.

A reading from the first book of Samuel

Samuel was sleeping in the temple
when the LORD called out to him.

"Here I am," Samuel answered.
He ran to Eli and said,
"Here I am, sir. What can I do for you?"

Eli replied, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed."
So Samuel went back.

Once more the LORD called Samuel's name.
Samuel got up.
He went to Eli and said,
"Here I am. What can I do for you?"

But Eli told him, "Son, I didn't call you.
Now go back to sleep."

Samuel did not realize that the LORD was speaking,
because this was the first time the LORD had spoken to him.
When the LORD spoke a third time that night,
Samuel again went to Eli and said,
"Here I am. What can I do for you?"

Eli now knew that it was the LORD who was speaking to Samuel.
So Eli told him, "Go back to bed.
If someone speaks to you again,
answer, 'LORD, I am your servant.
Speak, and I will listen.'"
Once again Samuel went back and lay down.

The LORD came and stood beside Samuel.
Then he called out as he had done before, "Samuel! Samuel!"

The boy replied, "LORD, I am your servant.
Speak, and I will listen."

As Samuel grew up,
the LORD was with him and made everything he said come true.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 40:1 and 3ab, 8 and 11

R/. (8a and 9a) Here am I, Lord;
I come to do your will.

I patiently waited, LORD,
for you to hear my prayer.
You listened
and you gave me a new song,
a song of praise to you.

R/. Here am I, Lord;
I come to do your will.

"I enjoy pleasing you.
Your Law is in my heart."
You, LORD, never fail
to have pity on me;
your love and faithfulness
always keep me secure.

R/. Here am I, Lord;
I come to do your will.

ALLELUIA

John 1:41, 17b

R/. Alleluia, alleluia.

**We have found the Messiah:
Jesus Christ, who brings us truth and grace.**

R/. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

John 1:35-42 They saw where Jesus lived, and they stayed with him.

✠ **A reading from the holy gospel according to John**

**On one occasion John was with two of his followers.
When he saw Jesus walking by,
he said, "Here is the Lamb of God!"
John's two followers heard him,
and they went with Jesus.**

**When Jesus turned and saw them,
he asked, "What do you want?"**

**They answered, "Rabbi, where do you live?"
The Hebrew word "Rabbi" means "Teacher."**

Jesus replied, "Come and see!"

**It was already about four o'clock in the afternoon
when they went with him and saw where he lived.
So they stayed on for the rest of the day.**

**One of the two men who had heard John and had gone with Jesus
was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter.**

**The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother and tell him,
"We have found the Messiah!"**

**The Hebrew word "Messiah" means the same as the Greek word "Christ."
Andrew brought his brother to Jesus.**

**And when Jesus saw him, he said,
"Simon son of John, you will be called Cephas."
This name can be translated as "Peter."**

The gospel of the Lord.