

***ctkAlive!* Scripture Study**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**2021—B Cycle**



*Jesus invites us to follow him  
in the great adventure of making the world  
a better, safer place for all human beings to live in.*

*For your convenience and to broaden your benefit from this and all sessions in this series, you will find links to books, authors, and other references mentioned in the text.*

*Caution: Links to the internet are like rabbits dashing across a hunter's path. Instinct says, "Chase after that link!" Instead, we suggest waiting until you have followed the entire reflection. Then take all the time you wish to follow these interesting and educational links.*

*Exception: In the course of these reflections, you may have an opportunity to watch or listen to a relevant song or video.*

*Gender usage in writing: We are conscious of gender references to God in the Scripture texts. Often, attempts to rewrite these passages result in awkward sentence structures. We have left the biblical translations as they are but do our best to be inclusive in all other parts of the reflection.*

**Opening Prayer**

*Source unknown*

**"Jesus: Our Companion on the Journey"**

Wise and faithful Jesus, you lovingly abide in my depths.

Awaken me to the beauty within and around me

and guide my steps as I journey with others in faith.

Clothe me, Lord, in strength and humility.

Clothe me in strength to persevere when faced with challenges

and with humility to admit wrongdoing, when I have hurt others.

Amen

**Introduction to the Second Sunday in Ordinary**

**Readings:**

First Book of Samuel 3: 3-10, 19) "The Lord called to (the young boy) Samuel, who answered, 'Here I am.'"

Responsorial: Psalm 40: 2, 4, 7-10 “Then I said, ‘Here I come! As the scroll says of me. To do your will is my delight, O God, for your law is within my heart.’”

First Corinthians 6: 13-15, 17-20 “Glorify God in your body.”

John 1: 35-42 “As Jesus walked by, (John the Baptist) said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God.’”

### **A Reading from the First Book of Samuel (3: 3-10, 19)**

“The lamp of God was still lighted and [the boy] Samuel also lay in the house of Yahweh near the Ark of God. Then Yahweh called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’

“Samuel answered, ‘I am here!’ and ran to Eli saying, ‘I am here, did you not call me?’

“But Eli said, ‘I did not call. Go back to sleep.’

“So, Samuel went and lay down.

“Then Yahweh called again, ‘Samuel.’

“Samuel stood up and went to Eli saying, ‘You called me; I am here.’

“But Eli answered, ‘I did not call you, my son. Go back to sleep.’

“Samuel did not yet know Yahweh; and the word of Yahweh had not yet been revealed to him. But Yahweh called Samuel for the third time; and he went again to Eli saying, ‘I am here for you have called me.’

“Eli realized that it was Yahweh calling the boy. So he said to Samuel, ‘Go, lie down, and if he calls you again, answer: “Speak, Yahweh, your servant listens.”’

“Then Yahweh came and stood there calling, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ as he did before.

“And Samuel answered, ‘Speak, for your servant listens.’

“Samuel grew. Yahweh was with him and made all his words become true.”

### **Personal Reflection**

A Biblical “judge” was a ruler, military leader, and someone who presided over legal hearings. The prophet, Samuel was the *last* judge of Israel and the first major prophet since Moses. At the pleading of the Jewish people, Samuel inaugurated the Jewish monarchy by anointing Saul as the first king of Israel.

The call of Samuel in this reading reminds us that every person has a vocation in life, i.e., God calls us as individuals and destines us to accomplish our own *irreplaceable* tasks.

In directing our lives, each person must ask: “What does God want me to do with my gift of life?”

— *When did I “hear” God’s voice speak to me directly and personally, whether in words, situations, or something another person said to me? Under what circumstances did this occur? What message did I receive on that occasion?*

— *If I've never received or simply cannot recall a personal message from God, how likely is it that I—in contrast to the boy Samuel—haven't been listening very well to God's repeated calls?*

— *What have I done with the "gift of my life"? Using the word, "vocation," in the broadest sense (not just as priests, religious sisters and brothers), what is my calling, i.e., my given-and-chosen vocation in life?*

### **Responsorial Psalm 40 (2, 4, 7-10)**

Thanksgiving and a further plea for help.

*I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.  
With resolve I waited for Yahweh;  
he listened and heard me beg.  
He put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God.  
Many will see and be awed  
and put their trust in Yahweh.  
*I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.**

Sacrifice and oblation you did not desire;  
this, you had me understand.  
Burnt offering and sin offering you do not require.  
Then I said, "Here I come! as the scroll says of me.  
To do your will is my delight, O God,  
for your law is within my heart."  
*I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.*

In the great assembly I have proclaimed your saving help.  
My lips, O Yahweh, I did not seal—  
you know that very well  
*I will walk before the Lord, in the land of the living.*

### **Personal Reflection**

The anonymous psalmist tells us the Lord has rescued him. In the final verse, he admits his own poverty and affliction. The psalmist assures me that, no matter who I am or what my economic condition might be, God will always and forever be at my side. Those of us who have personally experienced divine love and tenderness feel *driven* to announce it as a great message.

"He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God."

— *When did I last praise God for some blessing I received? What was that blessing, specifically? How faithful have I been to that new song? Or have I slipped back into singing my tired old, downbeat dirge? How willing am I to start again . . . today, listening for the new song God wants to sing with me?*

“To do your will is my delight, O God, for your law is within my heart.”

— *When have I obeyed God's will but “without” delight? How do I, at times, resist accepting God's will for my life? (Be specific.)*

— *When I changed my attitude and returned to God who dwells “within my heart,” what led to my “conversion” (change of attitude)? How did grace unseal my heart?*

### **From the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (6: 13-15, 17-20)**

“Food is for the stomach, as the stomach is for food, and God will destroy them both. Yet the body is *not* for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord is for the body. And God, who raised the Lord, will also raise us with his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? And you would make that part of his body become a part of a prostitute? Never!

“On the contrary, anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Avoid unlawful sexual activity entirely. Any other sin a person commits is outside the body; but those who commit sexual immorality sin against their own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, given by God? You belong no longer to yourselves. Remember at what price Christ bought you, and make your body serve the glory of God.”

### **Personal Reflection**

Paul's “down-and-dirty” teaching in today's reading focuses only on illicit sexual unions. To understand his broader teaching on good and evil, we must consider his other teachings on morality. For example, Chapter 5: 11 states, “I now write to you not to associate with anyone named a brother, if he is immoral, greedy, an idolater, a slanderer, a drunkard, or a robber, not even to eat with such a person.”

In Ephesians 5: 3, Paul writes, “Immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be mentioned among you, as is fitting among holy ones.” These and other citations show Paul's broader understanding of right and wrong.

Today's “older” Catholics recall a time when sexual immorality seemed to be. If not the only, at least the highest form of rebellion against a loving God. That was a time when Catholic theologians and overzealous preachers taught married couples that a desire to procreate constituted the only morally good reason to engage in sexuality.

Take note how careful Paul is *not* to make sexual purity the only or even the primary criterion of good and evil.

— *What do these concepts mean to me: “Your bodies are members of Christ,” and “Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit”?*

“Remember at what price Christ bought you.”

— *How seriously do I take these words? Don't I own my own life? How do I understand—and live—the fact that Jesus “owns me, body and soul”?*

## **Proclamation from the Gospel according to John (1: 35-42)**

“On the following day [*the day after Jesus’ baptism*], John was standing there again, with two of his disciples. As Jesus walked by, John looked at him and said, ‘There is the Lamb of God.’

“On hearing this, the two disciples followed Jesus. He turned and saw them following, and he said to them, ‘What are you looking for?’

“They answered, ‘Rabbi (which means Master), where are you staying?’

“Jesus said, ‘Come and see.’

“So they went and saw where he stayed and spent the rest of that day with him. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard what John had said and followed Jesus.

“Early the next morning, he found his brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah!’ (which means the Christ), and he brought Simon to Jesus.

“Jesus looked at Peter and said, ‘You are Simon, son of John, but you shall be called Cephas’ (which means Rock).”

## **Personal Reflection**

One of the two [*who spent the day with Jesus*] was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He found his brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah, the Christ.”

Andrew then brought Peter to Jesus. Jesus looked at Peter and said, “So you are Simon, the son of John? You shall be called Cephas,” which means ‘Peter’ [‘Rock’ or ‘Rocky’].

— *Recalling a particular moment, when in my life did I just “hang out” with Jesus for a while—just two friends enjoying being together? What made that occasion so memorable?*

— *Knowing well, as I do, my Church’s serious imperfections, why do I still remain faithful to Christ and to my local and worldwide Catholic Community?*

After spending a day at home with Jesus, Andrew ran immediately to his brother Peter with the news, “We have found the Christ!”

— *Can I recall a particular instant when I said to another—and really meant—“I have found the Christ, my savior. I’ve really found him”?*

## **The Week Ahead**

Last week we reflected on our experience of perhaps the strangest year and Christmas Season of our lives.

On January 6 of this new year, America reeled in disbelief at the (*failed!*) insurrection called for and spurred on by the current President of the United States!! This event crudely reminded us of the shocking September 11, 2001, destruction of the World Trade Center’s twin towers by a group of foreign terrorists. Thankfully, both of these staggering attempts failed to put a dagger through the heart of

America's soul and identity as a beacon of freedom in the world. We are wounded, yes, but still alive.

### Journaling Prompts

— *How would I describe my initial response to the events outside and within the United States Capitol on January 6?*

— *What did I feel at the end of that "day that will live in infamy" (to use the words of Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt in his speech to the nation the day after the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii)?*

— *What are my feelings about my country's future, as we begin to reconstruct our national image as the "bright, shining star of democracy" around the world?*

Take some time to write down your memories and reactions during this most frightening post-holiday week.

### **For Inspirational Reading / Viewing**

#### Video:

[Daily Reflection](#) on John 1: 35-42, "Come and See," featuring Catholic evangelist, teacher, and author [Aneel Aranha](#) (January 4, 2019)

#### Book:

[Scarred by Struggle, Transformed by Hope](#) by [Joan Chittister, OSB](#)

This is the book Sr. Joan wrote in the aftermath of 9/11. A book she said in the opening line of Chapter One, "I *did not* want to write." It seems timely for this current moment in American history. Actor Martin Sheen writes on the book cover, "As ever, Joan Chittister's voice rises up from the struggle to offer a powerful and transforming source of hope."

*(I read this book when it first came out and gave it my highest grade. Now I'm reading it again.—AJG)*

#### Music Video:

Jesus said, "[Come and see.](#)"

Video used in the January 16, 2011 worship service at Birmingham United Methodist Church Milton, GA. Created by using clips from Gospel of John movie and Bob Bennett song "Come and See." (3 min.)

["Come and See"](#) composed and sung by Matt Redman

## **Preview of Next Week's Scriptures**

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jonah 3: 1-5, 10 "Forty more days and Nineveh shall be destroyed."

Psalms 25: 4-9 "Your ways, O Lord, make known to me; teach me your paths."

First Corinthians 7: 29-31 "The world in its present form is passing away."

Mark 1: 14-20 "This is the time of fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is at hand."

## **Closing Prayer**

*(edited and abridged for use here)*

### **Prayer to Our Liberating Savior**

Risen Lord, may I be a bearer  
of Your light, peace, and justice.  
Help me to be compassionate,  
one who cares for and inspires others.  
Liberating Savior, thank you for the many gifts  
you have freely given to me.  
Bless my shared journey with you  
through the remaining years of my life.  
And may the conviction of my heart  
and the witness of my life  
make a positive difference in our world.  
Amen.

*Source unknown*

## **Questions?**

Send any questions or comments you might have to [algarrotto@comcast.net](mailto:algarrotto@comcast.net)

The Sunday readings are from [Christian Community Bible: Catholic Pastoral Edition](#)  
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Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

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(follow this link to my spiritual novel, [Bishop Myriel: In His Own Words](#))