

14th January 2024Second Sunday of Epiphany/
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**Living the Word: I Samuel 3:1-20**

Samuel was persistent. Thinking that Eli had called out to him during the night, he thrice got out of his bed, sought out the old man, and declared 'Here I am, you called me'. But it was not Eli who had spoken to Samuel – it was the Lord. God had a plan for his people, and Samuel was to be given a vital role in the drama. We might sometimes struggle to hear God addressing us, or find it difficult to discern the path ahead. But we can learn from Samuel's example. Samuel simply said to God 'Speak, for your servant is listening'. He opened his ears to God, and trusted God to guide his steps. In a quiet moment today, whether in church or at home, why not come before God in quiet prayer, and simply say to him: 'Speak, for your servant is listening'.

From the Fathers:

The Epiphany is a season especially set apart for adoring the glory of Christ. The word may be taken to mean the manifestation of His glory, and leads us to the contemplation of Him as a King upon His throne in the midst of His court, with His servants around Him, and His guards in attendance. At Christmas we commemorate His grace; and in Lent His temptation; and on Good Friday His sufferings and death; and on Easter Day His victory; and on Holy Thursday His return to the Father; and in Advent we anticipate His second coming. And in all of these seasons He does something, or suffers something; but in the Epiphany and the weeks after it, we celebrate Him, not as on His field of battle, or in His solitary retreat, but as an august and glorious King; we view Him as the Object of our worship.

From Sermon 6: The Season of Epiphany, by St John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-1890, Theologian)

Collect:

Almighty ever-living God, who governs all things, both in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the pleading of your people and bestow your peace on our times. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

In today's First Reading, the young Samuel feels a prompting – a presence that demands his attention – but he is unsure what it is. Similarly, in every single human being the Holy Spirit is quietly prompting them to enter into a relationship with God. Such a relationship is found above all in the Church. So it is that, when in St John's Gospel Jesus meets two disciples for the first time, he invites them to his home: 'Come and see,' he says. Likewise, we too are being drawn by God to his house of prayer. Finally, after visiting Jesus, one of the disciples shares what he has seen. He uses the words that Christ himself had used: 'Come and see!' Perhaps today is a good day to consider whom we might invite to God's house for the first time?

Today's Gospel: St. John 1: 35-42/43-end

Liturgical colours: green

The theological virtue of hope is symbolized by the colour green just as the burning fire of love is symbolized by red. Green is the colour of growing things, and hope, like them, is always new and always fresh. Liturgically, green is the colour of Ordinary Time, the orderly sequence of weeks through the year when the Church is not keeping a season of feast or fast, a season in which we are being neither single-mindedly penitent (the purple of Lent or Advent) nor overwhelmingly joyful (the white of Christmastide or Easter).