

Good morning, today we celebrate the second Sunday of Ordinary Times. Some of John the Baptist's disciples believed he was the Messiah. However, in our Gospel today, John tells his disciples that he is not the Messiah and now it is time for them to follow Jesus the Lamb of God. One of those disciples was Andrew, the brother of Peter.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John:

John the Baptist was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, John said, "Behold, the Lamb of God." The two disciples heard what John said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to Jesus, "Rabbi" — which translated means Teacher —, "where are you staying?" Jesus said to them, "Come, and you will see." So, they went and saw where Jesus was staying, and they stayed with Jesus that day. It was about four in the afternoon.

Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus. Andrew first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah" — which is translated Christ —. Then Andrew brought Simon Peter to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you will be called Cephas" — which is translated Peter.

When I was in the Seminary, I used to listen to a radio broadcast called “Walk with the King.” Its host was Pastor Robert Cook, and he always signed off, “Walk with the King today and be a blessing.”

In our Gospel, John the Baptist tells Andrew to go walk with the King. Andrew begins following Jesus at a distance, and so the Lord asked him, “What are you looking for?” Andrew replies, “where are you staying.” Jesus invites him, “Come and you will see.” Andrew decides to stay with the Lord that day and his life would never be the same. For in Jesus, Andrew would discover the Messiah, the Christ, the Prince of Peace, the gentle savior, someone he would grow to love and follow.

Throughout the Gospel, we read stories of people who respond to Christ invitation to come to Him. Zacchaeus, the unjust tax collector, was seeking power and riches, until Jesus comes along and call him by name. Zacchaeus receives Christ, and gives away his riches. The Samaritan woman was seeking pleasure, but after she encounters Jesus, she brings her whole town out to meet Him. Bartimaeus, a blind beggar was looking for someone to trust in and calls out to Jesus for help. Jesus restores his sight, and Bartimaeus follows Him. Jesus would say, “This is why I have come; I’ve come to seek out and call those who are lost.”

Russel Okung is a very successful professional football player, who plays for the Carolina Panthers. When he was a young child his father passed away and he had to grow up fast and became really independent and self-reliant. However, at Oklahoma State College, he had many family and personal struggles. Russell began to realize that there were some things out of his control, things he knew he couldn't do on his own.

He tells how one day he was sitting in an empty chapel and sense that God spoke to him. He said, "It's crazy how God will come to you even in the most small, subtle ways — maybe even a whisper. Russell sensed the Lord whispering, "*You don't have to do this alone. You're not by yourself.*" At that moment Russell said that he realized God had always been there — since I was a very small child even. Even though he thought he was doing things on his own, he couldn't have done without the Lord.

Russell said from that day, he noticed things were changing. He felt more at peace with himself and peace about his situation. Russell Okung found what he was looking for that day, a Lord that he could put his trust in. Russell has had a great professional football career but his greater goal is to help young people find their place in the world.

Russell discovered what Zacchaeus, the Samaritan woman, Bartimaeus discovered, a Lord who calls people to come put their trust Him.

After reflecting on Jesus' countless invitations to come to Him, I wrote this poem called "Just as you are". To His Apostles, the Lord said: "Come and follow me." To those who were struggling, Jesus told them, "Come to me and you will find rest." To those who felt left out, Jesus reminded them, "No one who comes to me will I ever reject." Jesus said, "I have come that you might have life and life in abundance." Take time to reflect on this poem, hear the Lord calling you by name. Share this poem with others, especially those who are struggling or feel left out.

Just as You Are

Come to Jesus, just as you are,
Receive Him now, and not from a far.
The Lord sees you as His love,
Calling you from heaven above.
Jesus' voice is not demanding or yelling,
Its' a kind whisper, love beyond telling.
The Lord knows who you are, flaws and all,
He gentle smiles as you respond to His call.
Jesus is calling you by name;
Saying come my child, I'm glad you came.
Come to the Lord as you are, come and see
All that you are meant to be.

Father Marty Fisher 1/14/2021

Take some time this week to reflect on Jesus call in your life.
When and how did you hear the Lord call your name?

Let us pray: Please pray after me: Lord Jesus, I invite you deeper in my heart, that I may grow to know and love you more intimately. Help me to walk with you King Jesus today, so I may go out and be a blessing. Amen and Amen.

MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU, MAY GOD'S
FACE SHINE UPON YOU AND BE GRACIOUS TO YOU, MAY
GOD LOOK ON YOU KINDLY AND GIVE YOU PEACE.

MAY MARY OUR LOVING MOTHER, HOLD YOU IN HER
TENDER ARMS.