

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

“Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”

In the Gospel we hear Jesus say to his first two disciples, “come and see.” They accept his invitation and had an encounter with him which changed their lives. Each time we celebrate the Eucharist we have an opportunity to encounter the Lord. Let us prepare ourselves for this encounter.

Today we hear about a young boy, Samuel, brought up in the house of the priest Eli. He thought he heard his master calling him, but eventually he was instructed how to answer the call. It was God who was calling to him, and Samuel was to reply, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” From that day and from that experience of hearing the voice of God, Samuel grew up to be a great prophet, and, we are told that the Lord didn’t permit “any word of Samuel’s to go unfulfilled.”

Those who listen carefully to the word of God will also speak their own words with great care. Such speech has power to reach not only to the human ear and mind, but also to the human heart. When hearts speak to hearts, the world will know the power of peace. Such impressive speaking was the main event down by the waters of the River Jordan, where John the Baptist was gathering crowds that came to listen to his powerful words. He was clearly leading up to something, as he prepared people for someone who was to come. And when that someone came, John watched Jesus walk by, and told the two of his own disciples who were with him, “Behold there is the Lamb of God.”

Then the two disciples of John followed Jesus of Nazareth, who then turned and asked them, “What do you want?” What they wanted was to know all about him. On that day, they began their education. It would occupy them the rest of their lives. Listening to this Man, they knew they had struck gold. “Never before had anyone spoke like Him.”

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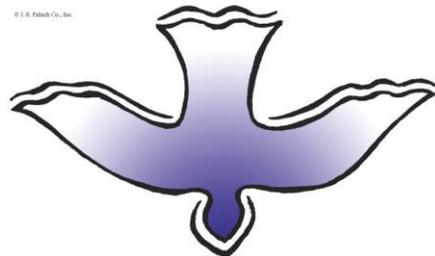
Finding Jesus of Nazareth is never a one-time event. It is a lifelong engagement. Each day we are invited to say to the Lord, “Where do you live?” And each day the Lord will reply, “Come and see.” For there is much to learn and much to find out. How can we ever say that we know the Lord? Our lives would indicate that we know very little and we understand less. But every new day is a fresh opportunity to seek the Lord and say, “Speak,

for your servant is listening.”

All our human relationships include the activities of listening and speaking. We can practice a true respect for ourselves and others. Any casual “using” of one another is unworthy of us as children of God. St Paul speaks to the Corinthians about that today. Honest and open involvement with one another is the way of life.

We do not know all the answers to all the challenges of life. But at least we can live the questions in an open and honest way. Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.

God’s call is mysterious; it comes in the darkness of faith. It is so fine, so subtle, that it is only with the deepest silence within us that we can hear it. And yet nothing is surer or stronger, nothing is so decisive and overpowering, as that call. This call is uninterrupted: God is always calling us. *(By Carlo Carretto).*



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