

For Sunday, January 14, 2018

Speak, Lord. Your Servant Is Listening

Second Sunday of Ordinary Time
<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/011418.cfm>

1 Samuel 3:3B-10, 19
1 Corinthians 6:13C-15A, 17-20
John 1:35-42

Now that the Christmas season is officially over, my family and I are slowly trying to get back into the daily grind of life. It's amazing how a couple weeks of presents, staying up late, and sugar can deconstruct even the best home routine and make everyone a mild form of a post-Christmas Grinch. Our biggest hurdle this new year has been an ever-present night coughing from a current cold strain making the rounds in our neighborhood. For the past two weeks, I've been up for at least two hours each night tending to sick children.

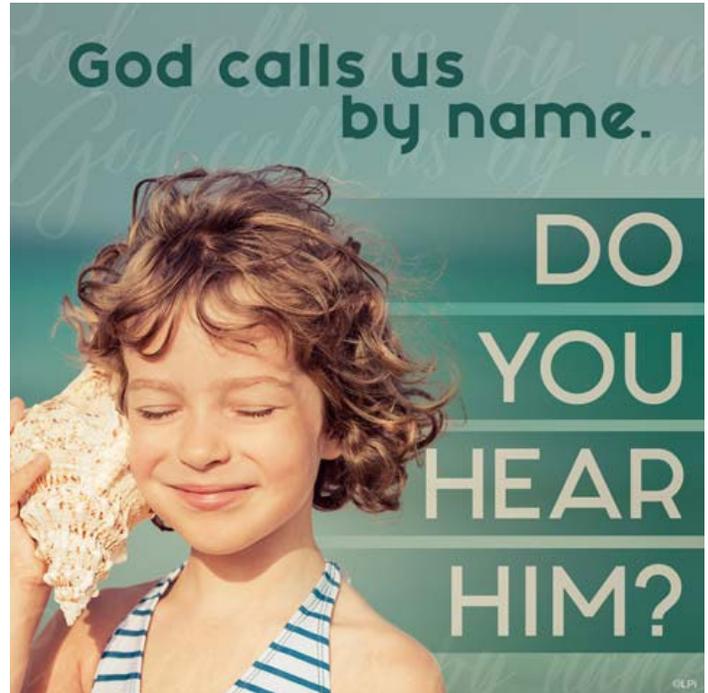
Reflecting on the first reading this Sunday, where we hear Samuel's call from the Lord, I'm brought to an odd state of gratitude for the coughs and sniffles. What strikes me the most about Samuel is that when God called him, he missed the point a few times before finally discovering who was beckoning him. And what's more, he needed help coming to that discovery.

So often in my vocation, God has called me in mysterious ways much like Samuel. I have the heart of a champion and want to believe I could do heroic feats for the sake of Christ. I imagine God asking me to start a kitchen to serve the poor with my family or maybe write a book. But instead, in the deep of my slumber I'm woken with "*hack hack hack hack, Mommyyyy!*". It doesn't sound like the Lord. I'm disoriented and tired and daydreaming of grand ways I could be serving God if only I had enough sleep at night. The readings remind me that God's ways are not our ways.

The third time he's called, with Elijah's help, Samuel finally understands who is calling him. He is no longer confused and wandering about in the night. God has made the first move, and patiently called him, and now Samuel answers, "Speak, Lord". The past two weeks, I've been reminded that God is indeed calling me, only I've not been truly listening to recognize it's Him, hidden in the tasks of my vocation. With each night of coughs, I've slowly come to hear His voice.

The wonderful thing is that God is a patient lover. If we feel He isn't listening or our prayers aren't being answered, we can be assured it's not because He doesn't hear us, but perhaps because we don't hear Him. In the Catechism, we're reminded that God always makes the first move and we respond.

The second reading from St. Paul gives us a pragmatic game plan when we step up to follow the will of God. Everything we do ought to be pure and give glory to God. This upcoming Monday is [Martin Luther King, Jr. Day](#). Martin Luther King is one example of this as he fought to bring light to dark parts of our nation's history.



He wasn't perfect by any means, but without his influence and bravery, countless more people would have been violated and abused in our nation's history. King saw a call to do good, and he rose to action.

The past two weeks of illness have taught me to see those suffering right in front of me and to use my body to glorify God by doing something about it, even if imperfectly. Once we realize God is calling us, we have the courage to say, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening."

The Gospel shows us this reality as Jesus beckons his disciples and names Peter. He is reaching out; they are searching and intrigued even if they don't fully understand what the call means. Much like Samuel, the words hit their ears, something stirs in their hearts, and as they answer back, they begin experiencing communion with Christ. This is the beauty of conversion—finding that God has called us in places we may have never expected and moving away from sin toward Christ as we respond. We are called to glorify God with our whole selves, whether that means tending to sick children, sitting at a parish office desk, or speaking to the crowds. God is calling each of us by name ... do we hear it?

Angie Windnagle

PRAYER

Father, I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
Whatever you do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures.
I wish no more than this, O Lord.
Into your hands I commend my soul;
I offer it to you
with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,
and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands
without reserve
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father.
Amen.

— *Prayer of Abandonment* by [Bl. Charles de Foucauld](#)

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