

## **Second Sunday, January 17th: GOD'S CALL John 1: 35-42**

In the two readings of today; the First reading, the Book of Samuel ( 1Sam 3:3-10,19) and the Gospel of John (Jn 1:35-42) we are dealing with a unique and specific call, what is more commonly called a vocation. Samuel is being called to the role of prophet, and Andrew and the others to discipleship. The initiative is always with God. The 'call' is always his. And every call demands a Response. Great events often begin very simply. This was how Jesus began his mission. He looked for a little band of kindred souls and demanded total commitment from them. And He got it. God Calls us too, in many ways and at many different levels.

Chaim Potok, the American author, and Rabbi was an intensely religious man; a Jew who explored the dimensions of faith in our lives. From an early age, Potok knew he wanted to be a writer. But his mother wasn't so sure. When he went away to college she said, "Son, now I know you want to be a writer. But I want you to think about brain surgery. You will keep a lot of people from dying. And you'll make a lot of money." To which Potok responded, "No, Mama, I want to be a writer."

But "No," is not what Mama wanted to hear. So, every vacation break for four years she would repeat her comments about his becoming a brain surgeon and keeping people from dying and making a lot of money, and always his response was the same. Finally the son had enough, and, when the same mantra began, he cut off his mother with exasperation, and with great passion he told his mother, "Mama, I don't want to keep people from dying, I want to show them how to live."

Today's Gospel Lesson from John is a "**call**" story, but unlike so many call stories in scripture this one is not crisp, dramatic, or decisive. Today there is no flashing light, no booming voice, no clear instructions as to what the disciples are to do. Instead, what we hear is Jesus asking a question - a strange, penetrating question. The question is: "What are you looking for?"

We may not encounter Jesus in the flesh (Physically). But we can encounter him spiritually in faith as a Friend, a Brother, and a Savior. Jesus is forever passing by. He is always available to those who are sincerely looking for him. But he never forces himself on anyone. To those who are interested in knowing more, he says what he said to John and Andrew: "Come and see." Of course, it is not a once-and-for-all encounter, but a growing relationship with him that we are talking about.

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