

Cycle A

Second Sunday In Ordinary Time

Lectionary 64

Reading I: Isaiah 49: 3, 5-6

This is the second of the four *Servant Songs*; it is the **call** (similar to the **call** of Moses and Jeremiah) of the mission and destiny of the servant. The servant is speaking, describing and proclaiming God's **call** and commission, and vocation, if you will, to be a light to the nations. This certainly reflects one of the roles received at Baptism, to be prophet, to make known God's love for all people, the servants principal functions are to serve and glorify God.

Reading 2: 1 Corinthians 1: 1-3

Although this is the salutation of the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians it begins by wishing them well before launching into what will be his attempt to correct the community for the divisions that have arisen among them. This passage is another example of the **call** or **vocation** to fulfill one of the most difficult roles given to us at baptism, that is being the role of prophet. Following Jesus Christ will often call us to stand for the truth and be people of integrity, sometimes in situations that may put us at odds with those we are in relationship with.

Gospel: John 1:29-34

In today's gospel we encounter the prophet John. Notice that in this gospel he is never referred to as *the Baptist*. His purpose in this gospel, as in the others, is to announce and point to Jesus as the Messiah. This is John's unique **call** from God, to indeed prepare the way of the Lord and point to Jesus as the Lamb of God. John makes it clear that his **call** is to be the, if you will, advance man for Jesus. John, like all of us who claim Jesus Christ as Messiah, are to point to Jesus. Ultimately, our **call**, like that of John's, is to direct others to Christ Jesus.



build. plant. grow.
the word this week



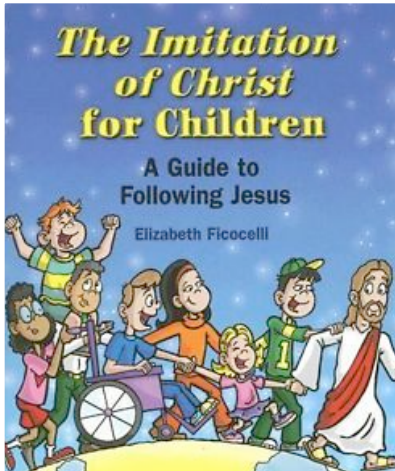
ordinary
time



lectionary
reading



children's
story



The Imitation of Christ for Children: A Guide to Following Jesus

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character
education
activity

The word vocation comes from the Latin word vocare, which means to call. The most special call we all receive is the call from God and that call always involves being of and living in LOVE.

The Imitation of Christ for Children: A Guide to Following Jesus

The Imitation of Christ originally written by Thomas a Kempis in the 14th Century is a classic for Christian living. Up until the 20th Century it was rivaled only by the Holy Bible for readership. The original work is far beyond the understanding of children. This new book, specifically written and illustrated with children in mind, is a great resource for teaching and forming children in their **call** and **vocation** to love and live as Jesus. It is a heartwarming, colorful and compelling children's book, which includes short little lessons of one page or less with humorous illustrations to keep the important message in a light vein accessible to children and adults alike.

It has been said that imitating someone is the greatest compliment. Throughout Christian history there have been a multitude of women and men who have aspired to imitating the love exemplified by Christ in both word and example. Each of them responded in love to the unique situation or era in which they lived and the to the needs of the people. Each of these saints, while imitating Jesus, made certain that they always directed others to Jesus Christ and not to themselves. We are called to do the same, to make certain that whatever good we do is seen as the work of Christ flowing through us. An image that might be helpful would be that of the prayer attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi, most especially the phrase: *Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.*

Activity

Step One: Provide the students with an enlarged copy of the Prayer of Saint Francis that they may write upon. Have them identify the active verbs that are contained within each phrase of the prayer by circling those verbs.

Step Two: After the students have identified the active verbs, ask them what those verbs mean and how those verbs involve them doing the work of God. They may learn that they are doing the work, but, it is truly God working through them. They can then identify that following Jesus means a **vocation** or **call** to imitate Jesus.

Each person is called to love and that love will be made manifest in the unique gifts and talents God has given us. Doing ordinary things with extraordinary love.



case study

**Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.**

What could you do today?

Take some time to make an inventory (a list of the many gifts and talents with which God has blessed you.) After making the list of those talents and gifts, make a column with each of those gifts and talents placed at the top of the column. Now think about the people in your life and even those you don't know. Write things that you might do with that unique gift or talent that would express God's love working through you for the people that are in your world. Remember that when any of us use the gifts we have been given by God, no matter how simple we might believe them to be, when used with extraordinary love for others they become a reflection of God's love. Think of yourself as a prism through which the sun shines. The sun is the source of light and when that sun shines through each of us there is a rainbow of colors, shapes and forms that shine from that prism. Likewise we become a reflective element of God's love in the world. Reflecting God's love in this world is the **call** and **vocation** of all of us.

Look Feel Know Act

The list of talents and gifts you have made is a partial list because as we grow and develop we learn more and more about ourselves and in doing so we unearth even more unknown or unrealized gifts and talents. Often we will encounter people that will see gifts and talents within us that we never realized. Similarly, we should be alert to helping others see their hidden gifts.

As we become more and more aware of these gifts, we learn to unwrap them and see them as the present they are. Each situation and person that we encounter in life may offer us an opportunity to expand our use of each gift we have been given by God. Seeing each opportunity in life, even when it might be uncertain or a challenge, may allow us to trust God's loving presence to us and further develop the gifts God has bestowed upon us.

As time passes, we grow in strength of the knowledge that these God-given gifts can enable us to do wonderful things in life. By simply acknowledging, using and celebrating those gifts something extraordinary may occur from what we might have thought to be very ordinary parts of who we are. Again, ordinary things done with extraordinary love reflect God.

The Imitation of Christ for Children provides, in a child-friendly manner, the virtues and manners whereby we can follow Christ. It is absolutely essential to know that we will follow God's will and live out our **call** or **vocation** by utilizing the particular gifts that God has given to each of us. Such a practice will be our unique manner of following Christ; the unity of a people following Christ will be defined by the fact that all have been **called** to the **vocation** of Love.

Pray that you will always allow Jesus to lead you in every step of your life. Each and every day make an offering of your day and your talents as a gift to God. The gifts we have are given to us by God and what we do with them in a virtuous and right manner is our gift back to God.



closing
tool



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