

FATHER MARK SCHULTE HOMILY
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 17, 2021
“God Speaks to His People in Different Ways”

Jesus said, “my sheep hear my voice, and they follow me”. Listening to the voice of God is a prominent message in sacred scripture.

In the First book of Samuel, we see how Hannah was an Israelite woman who was childless. Being a woman of faith, she went to the temple and prayed to God that he would grant her a son. God heard her prayer, and she gave birth to Samuel. In gratitude to God, she took Samuel to the temple where Samuel would serve God in the Temple.

One day, as a boy, Samuel was sleeping in the Temple near the Ark of God. He heard his name called “Samuel; Samuel”. He thought Eli the high priest was calling him. Eli said, “I didn’t call you; go back to sleep.” This happened three times that night. Eli told Samuel, “If you hear your name called again say, ‘Speak Lord for your servant is listening’.” The Word of God was with Samuel and he became a great prophet and would eventually go on to anoint the first King of Israel, and the power of God was with him.

How many of us think that “this is a nice story in the Bible, that it could be true, but it really doesn’t have much to do with me?” “God doesn’t speak to me!”

The voice of God comes to us in different ways. If we open our hearts in faith, we too can hear the voice of God.

- God said: “I will place my law upon their hearts.”
- The Psalmist said: “If today you hear his voice harden not your hearts.”
- Jesus said: “My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me.”
- God said” “I will lead her into the desert and speak to her.” (Hosea 2:14).

And so, we do see that God intends for us to hear his voice. We may not hear his voice audibly as Samuel did, but we do hear it in different ways.

- We hear God’s voice in his Word, Sacred Scripture. In scripture, God speaks to us directly.
- We hear God’s voice through His Church, the Body of Christ. Jesus said to his disciples, “he who hears you hears me.” (Lk 10:16) (Her teachings).
- We hear the voice of God in our conscience.
- When we are at the point of crossing between right and wrong – God speaks to our heart.

The Catholic Church is the Body of Christ and we are his members. In the 2nd reading, Paul said to the Corinthians: “You must know that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit.” God’s spirit speaks to us quietly in the temple of our bodies, just as God spoke to Samuel audibly in the Temple near the Ark.

Many people come to our parish church at all times of the day. Jesus is here present in the Holy Eucharist, more profoundly than at the Ark of the Covenant where Samuel slept and heard God’s voice. People speak to him here and then listen to what he tells them.

What would happen if more people would actively listen for God’s voice in the many ways he tries to speak to us?

- In Sacred Scripture.
- Through the teachings of his Church.
- In the voice of our conscience.
- In some quiet, desert place.
- Peace and harmony would come to us.
- Jesus said: “My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me.”

Instead – how many prefer the voice of the world?

- They prefer their own will rather than the will of God.

In the Gospel, God spoke through John the Baptist. The disciples heard John proclaim that Jesus is “the Lamb of God”. John is telling us this too.

Open your hearts to the Voice of God and follow Him. “Listen to Him.”