

LIVING FAITH

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JANUARY 14, 2024



THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY-- John 1:35-42

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, 'Look, here is the Lamb of God!' The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see.'

They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon.

One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which is translated Anointed).

He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas' (which is translated Peter).

REFLECTING ON THE GOSPEL

Many of us were taught that to be a faithful Christian, within the denomination of Roman Catholicism, one has to go to mass on a regular basis, follow the laws of the Church and believe in our faith as articulated in the Creeds. This is all of course true, but we see in the readings today another, crucial dimension of belief in God that is not often discussed: having an openness to discover God.

In the Gospel Andrew, a disciple of the John the Baptist, is pointed in the direction of Jesus and his questions to him, is "Where are you staying?". To this Jesus invites him, "Come, and see." Andrew comes to Christ with a question, seeking to know where Jesus lives, where can he be found. Jesus does not give a direct answer, but instead invites him to come and see; it is an invitation to join, to build a relationship and to discover.

To be a Christian, is to adopt a disposition of listening and to risk being changed by what we hear; this is primarily true when we listen to God, but it is also true when we extend that listening to one another. Andrew, too is open. He is bold and asks Jesus a question. A genuine follower of Christ is not afraid to ask questions of God, and of God's son. In fact, questions are the engines that drive us to gain knowledge, to learn and to grow. Andrew's question leads him to discover where Jesus is staying; in a metaphorical sense, Andrew is asking where can he find Christ in his life; he seeks the Lord, he is open to discover. And he grows not only in knowledge of Christ but in a life changing relationship with Him. In our lives as followers of Jesus Christ may we grow through the examples of Samuel and Andrew to become more open and strive to be better listeners, questioners, and seekers of Christ in our lives.

TALKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- How are you open to God's presence and God's call in your life?
- Where do you see or hear God? What are some of the ways that you answer God?

Gospel: Family Connection

In today's Gospel we learn about one of at least two family relations that appear among Jesus' first disciples. Andrew is the brother of Simon, whom Jesus renames Peter. In next week's Gospel, we will learn about the brothers James and John, the sons of Zebedee. We know from the letters of Paul and other witnesses to the early Church that it was a common occurrence for an entire household to be baptized together. From the very beginning of the Church, families helped one another to know and follow Jesus. We hope and pray that this continues to be true in our family life.

Before your family gathers, look around your house and gather some items that your family might have that remind you of your faith. Perhaps you have a cross or crucifix displayed in your home, a statue of Mary, or statues or other art depicting saints. In today's Gospel we learn about how Andrew led his brother, Simon, to Jesus. Read today's Gospel, John 1:35-42.

In our family life, we also help to lead one another to Jesus. Talk together about the items that you gathered, discussing what these items mean to you and how you might use them during the day for prayer. Pray that your family will continue to help one another grow in our faith in Jesus. Pray together the Glory Be to the Father.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/second-sunday-of-ordinary-time-b-sunday-connection>



Subscribe to our weekly Catechetical resource. E-mail: Familycatechesis@rcsj.org

THE CHURCH TEACHES: WE ARE ALL CALLED TO BE MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

In 2013, Pope Francis wrote an Apostolic Exhortation entitled *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel). In it, he called the entire Church to a missionary transformation, and every individual to be a missionary disciple.

Pope Francis begins the letter with these words:

The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew... (EG, 1)
How have you encountered Jesus? Where have you encountered Jesus?



Pope Francis writes:

I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since "no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord".^[1] The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms... (EG, 3)

What does it feel like, to know that Jesus is waiting for you with open arms?

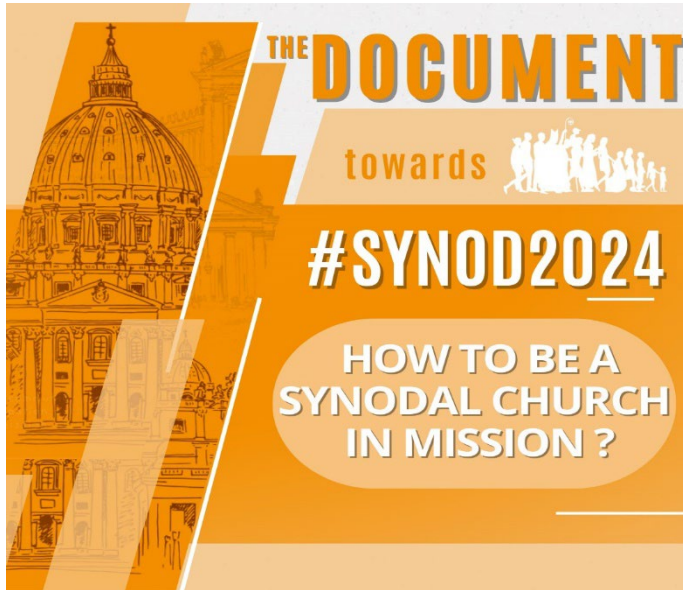
Pope Francis says that every one of us are called to be Missionary Disciples:

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are "disciples" and "missionaries", but rather that we are always "missionary disciples". If we are not convinced, let us look at those first disciples, who, immediately after encountering the gaze of Jesus, went forth to proclaim him joyfully: "We have found the Messiah!" (Jn 1:41). The Samaritan woman became a missionary immediately after speaking with Jesus and many Samaritans come to believe in him "because of the woman's testimony" (Jn 4:39). So too, Saint Paul, after his encounter with Jesus Christ, "immediately proclaimed Jesus" (Acts 9:20; cf. 22:6-21). So what are we waiting for? (EG, 120)

How are you a missionary disciple in your everyday life? By what actions do you proclaim the Good News of Jesus?



THE SYNOD ON SYNODALITY NEXT STEPS



[Synod.va](https://bit.ly/3Tipg6P) has published the guidelines [\[https://bit.ly/3Tipg6P\]](https://bit.ly/3Tipg6P) to continue our Walking Together towards the Second Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

"How can we be a synodal church in mission?" Seeking a dynamic balance between the universal church and its local roots, local churches will contribute to the synodal journey by deepening aspects of the Synthesis Report relevant to their context. The deadline for contributions is set for May 15, 2024.

For more information www.synod.va

GUIDING QUESTION TO DEEPEN REFLECTION

The local Churches and the groupings of Churches are firstly invited to contribute by deepening aspects of the Synthesis Report that are fundamental to the Synod's theme. These contributions are guided by the question:

"HOW can we be a synodal Church in mission?"

THE TWO LEVELS OF DEEPENING

The guiding question needs to be addressed on two levels, always having as its reference point the Synthesis Report as a whole.

a) At the level of each local Church: **HOW can we enhance the differentiated co-responsibility in the mission of all the members of the People of God?**

What ways of relating, structures, processes of discernment and decision-making with regard to mission make it possible to recognise, shape, and promote co-responsibility? What ministries and participatory bodies can be renewed or introduced to better express this co-responsibility?

b) At the level of relations between Churches, between groupings of Churches at different levels and with the Bishop of Rome: **HOW can these relations be creatively articulated in order to find "a dynamic balance between the dimension of the Church as a whole and its local roots"?**

THE NEXT STEPS IN EACH DIOCESE...

Starting from the guiding question and the two levels indicated above, **each local Church is invited to carry** the best approach to take. The first step will be to choose the perspective with which to approach the guiding question, reflecting on the relative chapters of the *Synthesis Report*. Realistically, it will not be possible to examine all the implications.

Therefore, each local Church is invited to focus on those aspects that enable it to make a contribution in the light of its own situation, character and experience, sharing good practices that represent visible and concrete signs of synodality. Each local Church (diocese) is to carry out a further consultation, determining for themselves what is possible in the time available, and forward the results to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops by May 2024.