

SUNDAY PLUS

Follow the call



The power of introductions

In the three other Gospels, Simon Peter is always the first person to be called to follow Jesus as a disciple. In the Gospel of John, however, it is Andrew who introduces his brother Peter to Jesus. If Andrew ever became tired of being identified as the brother of Peter, the fourth Gospel gives him the unique role of being one of the first two disciples of Jesus, the other being unnamed. Andrew then introduces Peter to Jesus, who becomes the third disciple.

Andrew was already a disciple of John the Baptist. Andrew's master, John, pointed out Jesus as the Lamb of God, introducing Andrew to the one who was greater than his master. Following that introduction, Andrew follows Jesus. The beginning of Andrew's discipleship is in being introduced to Jesus by John. What

John the Baptist does for Andrew, so Andrew in his turn does for his brother Simon Peter. Thus the first three disciples are introduced to Jesus.

Being introduced to Jesus and introducing others to Jesus become a basic part of discipleship. Sometimes we meet someone who makes a real difference in our lives; we want others to have the same experience so we tell them: "You really must meet so-and-so" – hoping that the encounter will turn out to be good news. Thus the Gospel begins not with ideas or laws but in a loving relationship with Jesus. Without that loving relationship, discipleship will be a career not a calling.

Fr Denis McBride's many books are available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk

by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

Followers of Francis

by Dr Lawrence Osborn

Francis of Assisi sometimes described his vocation as following in the footsteps of Christ. He just wanted to follow Jesus and, like Andrew in the Gospel reading, introduce others to him along the way. So it came as a surprise to

Francis when others joined him on his journey. He called them companions rather than followers, and he struggled with the practicalities of leading the community that formed around him.

According to his first biographer, as Francis lay dying, he said to his brothers, "I have done what was mine to do; may Christ teach you what is yours!" All the things we usually associate with the Franciscan way – poverty, simplicity, joy – are actually secondary to and flow from this. Francis calls us, as he did his first companions, not to follow him, but to join him in following Jesus.

Dr Lawrence Osborn is an Anglican Franciscan Tertiary.



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I am calling you

by Sr Thérèse Garman SMP

Andrew gave a simple word of witness to his brother on the very first day of his own Christian journey: "We have found the Messiah." Andrew is mentioned three times in John's Gospel, and each time he's bringing someone to Jesus. His was a ministry of introductions.

He begins by personal discovery. He spent an afternoon and evening with Jesus. This experience motivated him to introduce others to Jesus. We need to spend time with Jesus to experience the love that we are called to share with others. We're not passing on a received message, but something that has impacted our own lives, that's adding meaning and value to our life.

Andrew not only spends time with Jesus, he seems a very relational

person. To find opportunities to share our faith, we need to spend time with other people. There are many ways to be a witness in how we live our lives and by the things we say.

Sr Thérèse Garman is a Sister of Our Lady of Providence.

“**Only this will make our lives fruitful and keep our hearts alive: putting Jesus where he belongs, in the midst of his people... Let us accompany Jesus as he goes forth to meet his people.**

Pope Francis

Loving Lord, my name is important to you. You use it to call me to come close to you. If I wander away from you, Lord, call me back to your side. Stay with me in all that I say, think and do. Amen.

Today:
1 Samuel 3:3-10. 19
1 Corinthians 6:13-15. 17-20
John 1:35-42

Monday:
1 Samuel 15:16-23
Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday:
1 Samuel 16:1-13
Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday:
1 Samuel 17:32-33. 37.
40-51
Mark 3:1-6

Thursday:
1 Samuel 18:6-9; 19:1-7
Mark 3:7-12

Friday:
1 Samuel 24:3-21
Mark 3:13-19

Saturday:
2 Samuel 1:1-4. 11-12.
17. 19. 23-27
Mark 3:20-21

Next Sunday:
Jonah 3:1-5. 10
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20