



Society of African Missions

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 Phone: 201-567-0450
 Visit our website
www.smafathers.org



Administration:

Fr Ranees A. Rayappan,
 Provincial Superior
Fr Dermot Roache,
 House Superior

Mass Schedule

Sundays
 10:00 am; 12 noon
Weekdays & Holy Days
 11:45 am
Christmas & New Year's Day
 10:00 am; 12 noon

Confessions

By appointment. Contact
 Fr Dermot Roache 201-567-0450 Ext 212

Bereavement & Visit to the Sick

Contact Fr. Dermot Roache
 201-567-0450 Ext. 212

Perpetual Mass Association

Office open Monday-Friday
 from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

S.M.A. Vocation Office

Fr. Julien Esse, SMA
 551-449-4357

Sunday Collection: \$560

Thank you for your support.
 Please remember to support
 your local parishes.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Masses for the week of January 17, 2021 - January 23, 2021

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
Sun.-Sat.	8:00	Liv & Dec Benefactors of the SMA	
Sun. Jan. 17	10:00	Thanksgiving for Linda Palmares (Liv.)	Family
	12:00	Rosa Hernandez (Liv.)	Friend
Mon. Jan. 18	9:30	Albert & Helen Fleckenstein+	
	11:45	Donald Maxsweeney+	Duggan Family
Tue. Jan. 19	9:30	John J. Sheehy Sr, & Helen M. Sheehy+	
	11:45	Special Intentions John Parra	Victoria Costa
Wed. Jan. 20	9:30	Victor A. & Catherine M. Migliaccio+	
	11:45	Linda Rubio—Elena Padaloy Arabi (Liv.)	Linda Rubio
Thurs. Jan. 21	9:30	Rev. Fr Joachim DiMello (Deceased)	Anne V. Teelan
	11:45	Catherine M. Hamill+	Friend
Fri. Jan. 22	9:30	Edward T. Mullins+	Kathleen Jaeger
	11:45	Jack Kenny+	Mae Kenny & Family
Sat. Jan. 23	9:30	Edward T. Mullins+	Kathleen Jaeger
	11:45	Ann Quilling & Felicitas Garcia+	Linda Rubio

Today's Readings:

First Reading 1 Samuel 3:3-10. 19

Samuel hears the call of God and responds: "Your servant is listening."

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 6:13-15. 17-20

Use your body for the glory of God, for it is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Gospel John 1:35-42

Jesus invites two budding disciples to come and spend time with him.

“Come and see.”

Illustration

A mondegreen occurs when someone mishears a word or phrase, giving it a completely new meaning. The lyrics to songs are particularly susceptible to mondegreens. Bob Dylan's, “The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind”, becomes: “The ants are my friends, they're blowing in the wind.” “Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light” becomes: “Jose, can you see by the donzerly light.” Many people apparently believe “donzerly” is a real word. And famously on the long-running BBC comedy show The Two Ronnies, a labourer walks into a hardware store and asks for what sounds like four candles, until the frustrated storekeeper eventually realises the man is asking for “fork 'andles – handles for forks”. Understandably, children are prone to mishearing, especially when it comes to religious phrases: “Our Father, who art in heaven, Harold be thy name” is a classic. Or in the Hail Mary: “blessed art thou a monk swimming”. We are all liable to mishear and misunderstand.

Gospel Teaching

Today's readings are about the importance of hearing properly, about listening with the heart. The boy Samuel mishears as he is lying on his bed. When the Lord calls him, he mistakenly believes it is his guardian Eli calling him. Only after the third call does Eli finally understand that what Samuel is really hearing is the call of God. Samuel's response – “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening” – indicates the prerequisite for the perfect disciple: a commitment to listening to the voice of God and carrying it out. In fact, we are told that not only was the Lord with Samuel, but that the Lord let no word of Samuel's “fall to the ground” – an indication that Samuel was so in tune with the Lord's voice, with the Lord's mind and intentions, that everything Samuel spoke rang true and came to pass. Authentic hearing results in authentic speaking and acting.

In the Gospel, the two disciples of John the Baptist are also in listening mode. They have committed to following John in response to an inner call from God. And yet now John, in effect, sends them away to listen to the voice of another – Jesus, “the lamb of God”. It's not that they have been mishearing by listening to John. But John knows that a deeper listening is now needed, that there is someone better to listen to, someone – as John would go on to say – more powerful than he, someone filled with God's Holy Spirit. The two disciples go home with Jesus at about 4 p.m. and spend the rest of the day with him, listening to him. And Jesus' words, like Samuel's, are effective: in those few hours, they transform Andrew so dramatically that he is able to say to his brother Peter: “We have found the Messiah.” They have found what their inner voice had called them to look for.

Application

How do we become good listeners to the Lord? How do we allow ourselves to become transformed by God's Word – by Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh? Perhaps primarily, like those two disciples, we need to spend time with the Lord. That's not a skill, it's simply a discipline, a commitment.

But there are ordinary human skills that can help us tune in to the voice of God and allow it to change us. As with listening to another human being, when listening to the Lord, we need to get rid of distractions – the sound of TV and radio, switching off the phone perhaps. The best listening happens when we are alert but attentive: putting our body in an upright but comfortable position helps. Keep an open mind – the “open ear” of today's psalm – try to set aside preconceived ideas or expectations, because it's easy to mishear and misunderstand, to impose our own meanings, our own preconceived ideas. And don't interrupt – listening means exactly that.

Communicating with God isn't the same as holding a two-way conversation with a human being, but the essentials are the same. It's about relationship, trust, openness, quality time and listening with the heart to what is really being communicated. God's Word is ultimately a person – Jesus Christ. When we listen to the Lord, when we encounter the Messiah, our lives are changed. Because the Lord doesn't communicate facts or data – the Lord communicates God's self: God's love, God's life, God's mercy. When we allow ourselves to “hear” those things, be touched by them, they evoke a response in us which goes beyond mere words: they change our lives.