

## Homily for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Patience and punctuality are two qualities that are not readily apparent in today's society if you ask me. And the ironic thing is how they feed off of one another. For example, when you're running late for an appointment, and the person in front of you is driving too slow; don't *we* get impatient? And how quickly we blame the other person for driving so slowly! And how slowly we accept our own responsibility in leaving the house late in the first place!

Now, I don't profess to have patience and punctuality perfected in my life either. But, as I was praying about our Scripture readings today, it occurred to me that these two qualities are very important in our spiritual lives. For example, in the first reading, we see Samuel going to pester Eli three times while he was sleeping so see what he wanted. And because Eli was patient with Samuel, he was able to help Samuel understand that God was speaking to him.

And, in our Gospel today, two of John the Baptist's disciples immediately left their mentor, and followed right after a new mentor, Jesus, the Lamb of God. It's like there was no hesitating. They just did it. And before long, one of them, Andrew, tells his brother Peter that they found the Messiah. Wow!

Something tremendously important I've learned in the spiritual life is that we cannot push or pull God. In other words, we cannot make God move any quicker in our lives. God's timing is His timing. And it's perfect. He knows just the right moment for everything. And so, when it comes to our relationship with God, like any relationship, it requires patience. But, how can we be patient when we're praying for someone who's sick, and we want God to heal them now? Or, how can we be patient when we've lost our job and we're looking for work? Well, do we believe that God the Father really knows what is best, and that His plan is unfolding in our lives? Or, do we really think we know best, and want God to do what we say? We need to be patient with God, and wait on His timing.

And although we cannot make God move more quickly, in some ways, we can slow Him down. How? By sin. Sin is an impediment in our relationship with God. And sin acts as an obstacle to God working His will in our lives according to His perfect timing. Just look at the second reading today. St. Paul says that we must avoid immorality (sexual sin in particular), because our bodies were created to glorify God. We are temples of the Holy Spirit. And so sin distances us from God, who dwells within us!

Another very important thing I've learned, but perhaps even more difficult than patience, is being punctual with God. In other words, when God speaks, we need to move. Kind of like when mom or dad says to a child, "Would you please come up here and pick up your back pack from the floor", and they answer, "I will" (which means 10 minutes from now, maybe), so can we do with God. We know we should come to Mass every Sunday. We know we should go to Reconciliation more often. We know we should set aside quality time for prayer each day with God. We know, we know, we know. Maybe we think we'll get to such things "later", when we're older or have more time.

If Andrew and the other disciple didn't leave John the Baptist right away and follow Jesus, wouldn't they have missed the opportunity? I mean, Jesus would just have kept walking and would have been long gone. They had to make a decision and act as the inspiration of the moment moved them to do so.

The good news about patience and punctuality when it comes to our relationship with God is that He wants to help us respond in these ways. If we ask for God's help in these areas and really make them a priority in our lives, then, little by little, we will become less and less like the rest of society – impatient and always in a hurry. But only with God's help. God bless you.