

2B 2018 SML  
JN 1:35-42

What are you looking for? What do you want? Those are the first words Our Blessed Lord spoke in the Gospel of John just proclaimed. He said this to two disciples when the Baptist pointed out Jesus, and indicated that there was something absolutely unique about Him when he said, “Behold the Lamb of God.” And so two of John the Baptist’s friends, one Andrew, and the other traditionally understood to be John the Apostle, literally left John the Baptist and followed Jesus. For whatever reason, either:

- ✓ because John recommended Our Blessed Lord,
- ✓ or they found something attractive about Him
- ✓ or they sensed something in Him,

they began to walk down the road after Him. And at a certain point, Jesus stopped, turned around, looked at them and for the very first time, spoke in the Gospel, asking, “What are you looking for? What do you want?”

Keep in mind, that whenever the Gospel is proclaimed at Mass, it is not simply the retelling of something that happened 2000 years ago involving Our Blessed Lord, John the Baptist, Andrew and John. It is an event, meaning, that somehow,

mysteriously, what we just heard, is happening now, in this place. Jesus is not merely an historical figure that died a long time ago, but is

- ✓ the Eternal Son of God,
- ✓ who was crucified,
- ✓ is risen,
- ✓ is alive
- ✓ and is in our midst.

So somehow, Our Blessed Lord is walking up and down these aisles, stopping, and asking each one of us by name, “Stan, what are you looking for? Marie, what do you want?”

I wonder if I even know. He knows. But do I know? How often do I stop and ask myself a question as basic and as fundamental as that? Regardless of whatever it is you are living through right now, and all of us are living through something, (and if not, you have, or you will be), the grace and the mercy of God provokes us to reflect on these questions. “What are you looking for? What do you want?”

A favorite scene of mine in the movie “Risen,” which is about a Roman centurion, an atheist, who is taken in by the Disciples for the days after Jesus is risen. And one night, on a mountain, it’s just Our Risen Lord and the centurion – just the

two of them, alone. And the centurion says, “I don’t even know what to ask?” I don’t know that I would either. I don’t know that I would need to, as Our Blessed Lord would be able to read every detail of my heart.

If you notice, Andrew and John really don’t know how to answer Jesus. They answer Him with a question of their own. “Where do you stay?” which is an awkward way of saying, “Um, we don’t really know what we are looking for, but there is something about You, something attractive about You, that whatever it is that we are looking for, whatever it is that we want, is connected with You. Stated simply, You are the answer to that question. So where are You staying is a way of saying, quite frankly, we just want to be with You.

It’s worth remembering that these guys were not overly religious.

- ✓ They were fishermen.
- ✓ They were tradesmen.
- ✓ They were blue collar workers,
- ✓ real regular guys

like you and me who liked to get their hands dirty.

I read a story recently that’s been on my mind, about a man named Adolf Merckle, a German businessman who was

born into an extremely rich and prosperous family. He developed and grew businesses that he inherited from his grandfather, so much so, that he owned the largest German pharmaceutical wholesaler company. At the height of his career, he was worth \$12 Billion. At the writing of the article he was one of the top 100 wealthiest in the world, one of the five wealthiest in all of Germany. He lost \$3 Billion during the economic slump, but was still worth \$9 Billion, and threw himself in front of train and took his own life.

In that same story, there were 5 individuals, each of them leaders in their industries, worth hundreds and billions of dollars, and each of them committed suicide. Worth all that money, they did not find life worth living. They wanted more, and not being able to find more, they took their lives. In the circumstances of these men who seemed so blest, the question comes back, "What were they looking for? What did they want?" Because these men stand in front of me as a tragic testimony that fulfillment, a life of purpose, a life of real meaning, are not found in wealth, or in any of the things that wealth can acquire.

Perhaps Jesus' question to us today could be this basic.

✓ Why are we here?

- ✓ Why are you and I in this Church, some perhaps for the first time?
- ✓ Why have we come?
- ✓ What are we looking for?
- ✓ Are we even looking for anything?
- ✓ Or are we simply here out of habit, obligation, to earn some credit with God?
- ✓ To check off the box?
- ✓ Out of a sense of guilt?

Why?

Or are we here because we are convinced:

- ✓ that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life,
- ✓ that Jesus is the One who reveals Who God is and who we are
- ✓ that Jesus is the only One who can give to us a peace that this world cannot give and cannot take
- ✓ that Jesus is the only One who can show us how to find a life of real fulfillment
- ✓ that Jesus is the One who speaks His truth to us in His Word,
- ✓ that Jesus is the One who feeds us from this altar, thereby bringing us into a communion and a relationship with His Father Who is Love,

- ✓ that Jesus is the One enabling us and sending us out into a world to bring that Love, a world which is so broken, so needy, so hungry, so distrustful, so cynical and so longing for reasons to hope, a world so unable to give us what we are looking for, what we want.

For the last few weeks, we have been on the lookout for ICNU moments, “I see in you” a need for Jesus. I had one this past week at the gym. The owner of the gym walked by and said, “Good morning, Father.” Another member said, “Forgive me for eavesdropping, but did he call you ‘Father?’” I said, “Yes, I’m a priest.” Where?” “SML.” “I should know that. That’s my church but I haven’t been to Church in years.” I said, “That’s not going to work.” And he said, “No, it’s not. It’s not working.” So I invited him to Church this morning.

What are you looking for? What do you want? And where are you going to find It? I don’t know about you, but:

- ✓ I know what I’m looking for, better yet, Who I’m looking for
- ✓ I know what I want, better yet, Who I want
- ✓ I know where I’m going to find Him. (Point to tabernacle)