



Immaculate Conception
Church

Homily for the 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year B 2015

A young man nervously approached his girlfriend's father. "Sir," he stammered, "There is something important I would like to ask you. I was wondering if...I mean, er, ah...whether...that is, er, ah, if you would be willing..." In the midst of the young man's fumbling, the father grabbed his hand and shook it vigorously. Then he said, "My boy, of course I'll give you my permission. My daughter's happiness is all that matters to me." The young man looked puzzled. "Permission?" he asked. "You want to marry my daughter and you have my permission," the father replied. "Oh that's not it, sir," the boy answered. "It's nothing like that. You see, I have a payment past due on my car and I don't have the \$112 that I need. I'm worried that the finance company will repossess it. So I was wondering if you would lend me the money."

The father snapped back: "Certainly not! I hardly know you." There are many ways in which we can know someone. We can know a person as an acquaintance...a person we work with or go to school with. We can know a person as a relative...a member of the same family. And even there, you can find many shades of difference. And then you can know someone as a friend....a person with whom you share more than you might with others. And then, of course, there is the special and unique individual who is your true companion, or perhaps your life partner, your lover. And this person knows you and you know him or her better than anyone. What is important in this hierarchy of "knowing someone" is that the more you know and love someone, the less important are the "facts" of the person's life. Instead, it is the core, the heart, of the other person that makes all the difference.

I share these thoughts of knowing and loving, because the call of today's readings is "to know" the Lord, to know God. But it is not a call to learn "facts" about God. Rather, it is a call to become intimate with God...to allow oneself to be touched by God so that God's love radiates from our lives. Young Samuel must learn to be open to God's voice calling him. He must learn the ways of God by learning to hear the voice of God as it speaks to him in his heart. And the invitation of Jesus is to "come and see"....come and know Jesus not as a collection of facts but as friend and trusted companion in the journey of life.

For far too many of us Jesus Christ is an historical figure, a fine humanitarian, a wonderful and touching preacher. But that is because we do not know him. We only know facts and stories. And this is sad for there is no greater power or presence in our lives and in the life of the world than Jesus Christ. For it is Jesus who calms the storms of life. It is Jesus who takes the nothingness of our lives and multiples it. It is Jesus who soothes the pain of our hearts and saves us from moments of despair. It is Jesus who pulls us out of the fires of our own failures and moments of panic. It is Jesus who blesses our lives with our friends and with the unique and special human being with whom we share our lives. It is Jesus who leads us home to God. It is Jesus who is the Lamb of God, the beloved Son, the radiant redeemer.

But to know Him we must "come and see". We must take the time not to study or examine Christ. Rather, we must take the time to simply sit still and pray with the words of Samuel: "Speak Lord, I long to listen to your voice. See Lord, here I am."