

Homily Outline for the 2nd Sunday of the Year – Cycle B
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
January 17, 2021

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- I. Having concluded our liturgical celebration of Christmas last Sunday, we now turn during ordinary time to contemplate Our Lord’s public ministry (Jn 1:35-42).
 - A. Jesus starts with calling His disciples; He asks them: “What are you looking for?”
 - B. They respond with a question: “Where are you staying?”
 - C. Jesus replies with an invitation: “Come and see.”
 1. So they went and saw where Jesus was staying, and they stayed with him that day.
 2. Of course, they stayed with Him more than a day, because His kingdom is not of this world, and His kingdom lasts forever.
- II. Three years ago we had our Diocesan Synod on discipleship and stewardship.
 - A. I keep bringing this up because this was not a “one and done” event.
 - B. We need to keep revisiting the theme of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and a steward of God’s creation.
 - C. Today’s Gospel passage was the starting point for our Synod:
 1. Our Lord asks us, “What are you looking for?”
 2. How do we answer? I am looking for Truth? Peace? Love? Help? Joy?
 3. Perhaps we respond with the same question as the first disciples: “Where are you staying? Where do you abide?”
 4. Jesus replies with an invitation: “Come and see.”
 - a) He invites us to learn more about Him and His Church.

- b) *Disciple* often refers to a follower of Jesus, but the root meaning of the word is not “follower” – it’s “learner.”
 - c) We should ask, “Am I still learning from Jesus, or I think I already know everything I need to know?”
- III. In our first reading, Samuel gives us the example of how to learn from Jesus: “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening” (1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19).
- IV. In our second reading, St. Paul speaks of the virtue of purity (1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20).
- A. “The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord.”
 - B. “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you?”
 - C. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).
 - 1. Pervasiveness of pornography prevents us from seeing God clearly.
 - 2. Not just a question of avoiding sin, but striving for virtue.
 - D. Pope St. John Paul II said, “Purity is the glory of the human body before God. It is the glory of God in the human body” (*General Audience*, March 18, 1981).
 - E. St. Thomas Aquinas said that holy purity, which is part of the virtue of temperance, inclines is readily and joyfully to moderate our use of the generative faculty, according to the light of reason, helped by faith (cf. *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, 151, 2, 1).
 - F. Purity is an indispensable requirement if we are to love at all. Without purity, there is no charity, and since charity is the first virtue and the one on which all the others are founded, the one in which they find their perfection, the vital importance of purity is clear (cf. J. L. Soria, *Loving and Living Chastely* [Madrid: 1976], referenced in Francis Fernandez, *Conversations with God* [London – New York: Scepter, 2012], vol. 3, p. 74).
 - G. Means to purity:
 - 1. We must be firmly convinced that purity is possible and can be lived.
 - 2. Virtues of industriousness (intense work), courage, fortitude, sincerity.
 - 3. Prayer, sacramental confession, and the Eucharist; turn to the Blessed Virgin.
 - 4. Without purity, we remain earthbound; with this virtue, we grow in love.
- V. May God give us this grace. Amen.