

## Points to Help Homily Preparation from a JPIC Perspective

Readings of 2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time - Sunday, January 18, 2009

1 Sm 3:3b-10, 19

1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20

Jn 1:35-42

As we work on our homily for this Sunday, we are mindful that this is an extraordinary week in the civic life of our nation: Monday, is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Tuesday, the inauguration of a new president..

- The first reading is about young man, Samuel who, despite his young age is called by God to serve God and God's people. As Christians, all of us are called, gifted and sent to live a life of faithful citizenship and civic responsibility for a new millennium. Also, our reflection on the historical character of Barak Obama's call to the office of the President of the United States ought to lead us to taking a more active role in a political life of our country. As a preacher, you may want to consider speaking about how we as Franciscan have heard and responded to that call by creating Franciscan Action Network (FAN) as an effective advocacy tool. If you're interested in pursuing this idea further, listen to the video presentation on "*Resurrection Politics*" by Maryann Cuisimano Love, given at 2008 Ecumenical Advocacy Days. The video is available on the FAN's website site: <http://www.franciscanaction.org> (on the upper horizontal bar, go to "Resources" and click on "Multimedia.") To give people an opportunity to join the FAN and participate in its advocacy action campaign, you may want to consider providing this link to the FAN website in the parish bulletin.
- The second reading contains a typical Pauline approach to an individual and communal moral life. First comes the indicative: "Do you know that your bodies are members of Christ...that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?" Then, out of that profound Christian vision, comes the imperative: "avoid immorality," in its individual and social aspects. A short exploration of this reading may serve to help the people in reflecting deeper on the nature and source of our call to faithful citizenship beyond simply casting a vote in the elections. The Church's call to an active participation in a political life is deeply rooted in our belief in the sacredness and dignity of the human person and society.
- In today's Gospel, there is a theme very similar to the one in the first reading - God calling people. The exchange between Jesus and the two disciples of John expresses one of the most persuasive pastoral methodologies. Jesus' words, "Come, and you'll see," ring true for many people in our parishes, schools, soup kitchens, who were able to encounter the living Christ when they went and saw other Christians actively involved in the mission of the Church. Many people, especially young adults, are intrigued by Jesus but seem to need an extra push – an invitation – to "come and see." Can we, like Jesus, issue a challenge for those who want to grow in their spiritual life and to know Jesus? Can we say: "Come and see," and help us to serve meals for the homeless in our local community. "Come and see," and join us at the prayer vigil against death penalty and abortion. "Come and see," the dire situation of the poor in Haiti, Guatemala, Mexico, or in the West Bank – and help us to build bridges of solidarity. "Come and see," how we as a Church speak to our elected officials about protecting God's creation from a dooming ecological catastrophe. "Come and see," and roll up your sleeves, as we help to build another Habitat for Humanity house. I'd like to end with a poignant quote from Beyers Naude – a white South African anti-apartheid cleric. "Dare yourself to be challenged by faith that is real. If you talk about hunger, go and see where hunger is. If you talk about injustice, go and view what kind of injustice. If you talk about human dignity, go and see where human dignity is being violated. If you talk about racial prejudice, go and meet with the people who know themselves and experience themselves to be the victims of that prejudice. Unless you are willing to do that, you can never discover the full truth of the gospel."

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