

Sunday January 17th, 2021

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Reflection

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Current neurological research identifies not 5, but anywhere from 9 to 21 senses as part of the bundle of our human gifts – including the sense of temperature, the perception of balance, and the perception of body awareness in space. We are incarnate beings. We have bodily form. We grow in our relationship with God within these bodies - however strong, vital, broken, aged and fragile. And it's through all our bodily sensations and experiences, both welcome and unwelcome, that God relates to us.

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within youand that you are not your own?

Our bodies are finely tuned instruments and are the only way we have to apprehend the Spirit in us. A sensation, a deep inner knowing or intuition, a solid grounding. A shiver down the spine, a pause and recognition that something feels good and right; a flutter of our heart strings; a heaviness in the limbs or a stoop of our shoulders.

Samuel was lying down, in sleep. *Then the Lord called.* Samuel heard and responded. Do I do the same? It would mean moving out of my cozy zone of day-to-day distractions and numbing activities. I've been occasionally blessed to experience and tune into the events of everyday life, and to become still, quiet and attentive. I discover that my own deepest desires are also God's desires for me – a moment of insight followed by a little thrill of joy that courses through my whole being.

Truly, I ignore my body most of the time, taking it for granted until I'm sick or injured and suddenly constrained and diverted from my important "thinking" agendas. And then, my prayer is a plea to escape, to be rescued from this bodily confinement. In recent years, through stillness, a gradual acceptance, an inner attending, or being present, I have come to know deeply, though fleetingly, what

is trustworthy beyond my thinking mind. God is with me, right here, closer than my every breath.

Turning inward, I sit or lie in stillness and silence, opening up all my senses and responding to God's invitation to rest in Him. The Holy Spirit accompanies me and provides the nourishment, strength and courage needed to move out into the world. I return to daily life, engaging my senses to acknowledge my neighbor, to extend a hand in friendship to a stranger, to let my eyes light up in greeting at work, and to use my ears to listen with patience to another suffering soul. When I'm present and aware I cooperate and collaborate in the work of building the community of Love, the body of Christ.

Where are you staying? Come and see. Jesus welcomed Andrew's curiosity and interest. And he both invited and challenged Andrew to use his senses to see and experience for himself the path Jesus walked in the company of his Father. Jesus lived fully, and consciously in human form and in communion with Love. He is our example to follow, to imitate, and to learn and grow in. And so, enthralled with what he experienced in Jesus' presence, Andrew ran to find his brother Simon.

You are Simon, son of John. ...You are Samuel, son of Hannah... We are, each of us daughters and sons - seen, known and named; loved fully and completely right here in our messy and crazy aliveness, in this very precious place and time.