

## Our Faith/Living the Word

### 1 Samuel 3.3-10

This passage is about a young man who did not recognise God's call at first. God called Samuel and he thought it was his master Eli. Twice God called, twice Samuel went to Eli, twice Eli told him to go back to sleep. The third time God called, Eli realised what was happening and told Samuel, "The next time you hear the call, say, 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening'. When the Lord called the fourth time, Samuel was ready, ready to listen to God.

And "Samuel grew up and the Lord was with him and let no word of his fall to the ground". That is, he continued to listen carefully to what God was saying, to listen to God's call. And, in turn, he passed on what he had heard to others. God's Word is never to be kept just for ourselves. That would be like the man who kept the talent he had been given wrapped up in a cloth and buried it in the ground.

Everyone is called by God to be something, to do something for others with their life and with their unique gifts. God is calling me now, today. What is he saying to me? Am I really listening?

## Saints & Heroes

### Saint Vincent of Saragossa

Vincent was a Spaniard, who became deacon under Valerius, Bishop of Saragossa, who had brought him up. Vincent used to preach on behalf of the Bishop, who had a speech impediment. During the persecution of Diocletian he was arrested and imprisoned in Valencia. He was offered his freedom if he would give up the sacred books to be burned; when he refused, he was tortured and finally died. It is said that his body was then laid out for the wild beasts to take, but it was protected by a raven. Later, his body was thrown in a sack into the sea, but was found on the shore by a woman who buried it outside the town. St Augustine of Hippo greatly admired St Vincent, who became one of the most popular and famous of the early saints. He is commemorated on 22nd December in the Anglican and Roman Catholic Calendars.

### From the Fathers

The door of prayer towards heaven, towards the heart of God, is always a door of love into the world of human needs.

Archbishop Michael Ramsey (1904-1988)

17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 The Second Sunday  
of Epiphany  
2nd Week  
of the Year

## Follow Me

*Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. Mark 1.16-18*



One of the gifts that we receive from the Methodist Church is the Covenant Service. It's always held at the beginning of the year, and it celebrates the covenant bond between God and his people, and is an opportunity to renew commitment in service of Christ. The text for the service includes a very beautiful, but deeply disturbing prayer by John Wesley which contains the words: Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and with a willing heart give it all to your pleasure and disposal. In the Gospel readings for the first couple of Sundays in the year we hear the calling of the disciples, and when we hear that invitation of Jesus to "follow me" our first instinct might be to ask "where to?" It is remarkable that the disciples do follow, and in following spend time with Jesus and become convinced that he is the Christ, and themselves issue the same invitation to others. In their 'following' we see the pattern for discipleship that Wesley so beautifully encapsulates in his prayer. The disciple sets out with the Master in anticipation that more will be revealed on the way; Consistently in Jesus' company it is a dynamic relationship that requires attention, commitment and a willingness to be led where he takes us. 'Following' of this sort is about surrendering our own ego's to become more at the disposal of the one who calls, building our whole lives upon God's love. Do you expect to learn more about Jesus and to be led to new places as you follow him this year? Would you be able to pray the Covenant Prayer and really mean it?