

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday OT 1/14/18 B

Here I am. You called me?

A friend of mine sent me an e-mail the other day and started it with “Hey, are you out there?” Not quite the same as the Lord’s call to Samuel and for sure not for the same reason, but it got my attention.

Throughout our lives we all receive calls that could potentially change our lives forever. Before I came to the North Country I was offered a job by a large firm in the financial district of Manhattan. I chose to finish my degree so I landed, gratefully, at Potsdam College.

During my broadcasting career I was offered several jobs...the most appealing was in Rochester. But Kathy and I decided here is where we chose to stay.

I suppose we could take all the credit for making good choices but I think there is always some outside help if we listen for it.

St. Therese of Lisieux wrote “The Lord has always given me what I desire, or, rather, he has made me desire what he wants to give me.”

Eli, who was the chief priest of Shiloh at the time of our first reading, knew that God was not happy with him because of some decisions Eli made. When Samuel came to him the third time thinking it was Eli calling him...the chief priest realized the call was from the Lord...he told Samuel to answer. He knew part of the call from the Lord would result in the punishment Eli expected. Samuel was to be an agent of the Lord.

I heard a wonderful story about being an agent of the Lord this week. I have a very dear and long-time friend in Brooklyn. Her name is Mary. Mary told me...it is the first time she shared this with me... she had decided to adopt a young seminarian in the Caribbean after she received a significant inheritance in the late 1970’s. She paid the man’s way throughout his priestly formation. Their only contact with each other was an occasional letter. The man was ordained in 1985 and became a parish priest on the island of Jamaica in the Caribbean. They met once, when the priest came

to the States for a brief visit. But they lost contact with each other after that.

There had been no communication for thirty years. My friend shared the story with another priest friend and the story might end there....

One day, just before this past Christmas, the phone rang and Mary heard the man say, "Mary, this is Ken Richards. Do you remember me?" Of course she did. What she did not know floored her. He went on to explain he is the Archbishop of Kingston, Jamaica. Archbishop Kenneth David Oswin Richards to be precise. Needless to say Mary was overwhelmed.

God had called Mary to "desire what he wanted her to give" and like Samuel she responded "here I am."

In John's account of the calling of the disciples, it is Andrew whose eyes are open by the Lord. He is the one who runs to his brother Simon and announces "we have found the Messiah!" Andrew is the Lord's agent.

Is the Lord calling you to be his agent? It can be a simple nudge to visit a sick neighbor or to extend a helping hand to someone in need.

It can be a sense you need to stop and pray for an intention you feel in your heart.

It can be a desire to serve your church, your community, your family in some special way.

God's call can be answered simply: "Speak, for your servant is listening"

And trust in the will of God.