

**Reflection on the Gospel-2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B
(John 1:35-42)**

-Veronica M. Lawson RSM

A personal call to a particular a way of life is not always easy to explain, even to oneself. At my religious profession, I chose the challenging motto "To give without counting the cost". I have taken that motto seriously, even if I have often wanted to change it. Today's liturgy calls me back to what that commitment entails: I have come to realise that, in a very real sense, it encapsulates the gospel call to all the baptised.

The first reading describes a prophetic call, the "call" of the young Samuel who is to become a prophet of great stature within Israel. The story insists that God who takes the initiative while Samuel hears God's call. Initially Samuel hears the word of God, but needs an interpreter in order to understand the import of God's word to him. Eli acts as interpreter and guide, so that Samuel can respond with confidence and faith and grow up to speak God's word to the people.

The gospel focuses on the "call" to discipleship, a call that is addresses to every baptised Christian. The opening scene depicts John the Baptist with two of his disciples. John actually points the two disciples away from himself and towards Jesus whom he identifies as "the lamb of God".

What does it mean to call Jesus "God's lamb"? Does the expression refer to the *Passover lamb* whose blood signifies deliverance? Is it a reference to the *Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53* who takes on the sins of the many? Is it an image of *the lamb that God provides for Abraham's sacrifice* (Genesis 22)? Is it *the apocalyptic lamb* of Jewish literature of the time, the powerful conquering lamb that destroys evil in the world? Is it intended to suggest vulnerability as in the prophecy of Jeremiah 11:19 ("I was like a *gentle lamb led to the slaughter*").

There is never a simple explanation for the symbolism in John's gospel. There can be many levels of meaning at the one time. The symbol of strength in vulnerability certainly has potential for understanding who Jesus is in this gospel. John 1:29 tells us that the Lamb of God "takes away" the sinful condition of the world. Twenty-one centuries down the track there is still violence and hunger and exploitation of planetary resources on a massive scale. The work of the one strong enough to risk vulnerability so that others may have life, the work of God's Lamb, is also the work of disciples. It is the way of those who hear God's call and choose to walk the way of Jesus of Nazareth, in openness and love for God's people. The call to discipleship is a call to pour out one's lifeblood for the sake of the gospel, "to give without counting the cost".

2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME—YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

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**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 15TH JANUARY 2018**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	5.00 pm in Mercy Centre
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

ST. ALIPIUS	SAT	6.00 PM
	SUN	9.00 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN	10.30 AM

3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME—YEAR B

READINGS	First: Jonah 3:1-5, 10
	Second: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31
	Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

RECENT DEATHS: John Morris, Mary (Molly) Davey, Jacqueline Marie Vander Linden, Pat Moran.

ANNIVERSARIES: Jim Murphy, Bridget Curran, Michael Roach, Patrick Blood, Bridget Galvin, Jesus Dondoy, Michael Murphy, Margie Flanagan, Jane Shine.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Mary Barnett, Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Pauline Murphy, Maria Wilson, Noreen Mullane, Aurora Ferrer.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: Team 9: J. Patton ©, B. Brisbane, J O'Brien, J. Gibcus.

Next Week: Team 10: P. Saunders ©, M. Saunders

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 593.00
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>1,580.00</u>
		\$ 2,473.00
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 648.00



STUDY TOUR OF THE BIBLICAL LANDS 2018

Come and join us for our information session for *Study Tour of the Biblical Lands 2018* on Saturday, 20 January 2018 from 2.00—4.00 pm. In 2018 we are travelling to Jordan, Israel and Palestinian Territories, Turkey and Greece plus there is the opportunity to add on 3 days in Rome! If you are interested in attending this information session please advise me on 9412 3314 or via email jenny.delahunt@ctc.edu.au by Wednesday, 17 January 2018.

PROCLAIM CONFERENCE 2018—SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Diocesan Foundation has offered sponsorship for six people from the diocese to attend the PROCLAIM 2018 CONFERENCE in Brisbane from July 12-14 (www.proclaimconference.com.au). Further information is available on the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au.

DIOCESAN E-NEWS

Diocesan e-News is available to all members of the Diocese and those associated with, or with an interest in the life of the Diocese. It is published every two weeks and distributed via email. You can subscribe to receive e-News on the Diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or you are welcome to submit items for publication to enews@ballarat.catholic.org.au. News items submitted should have relevance to the life and activity of the parishes and schools of the Diocese and include photos where possible.

DIOCESAN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT PROJECT WORKER

Ballarat Diocese will be employing a Project Worker in Youth and Young Adult Ministry in 2018, the Year of Youth. This will initially be a 12 month position, fulltime preferred but not essential. A position description will be available on the diocesan website in January or you can contact youth@ballarat.catholic.org.au to have the position description emailed to you.

ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY—THANK YOU

We wish to thank the School Communities within our Parish and all parishioners for their support to our recent Christmas Appeal. We are encouraged by your generosity and wish you peace and happiness for 2018.

PRAYING
by
Mary Oliver

*“It doesn’t have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot,
or a few small stones,
just pay attention, then patch
a few words together and don’t try
to make them elaborate.
This isn’t a contest but the doorway
into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.”*