

Week 2: Come and you will see

It seems fitting this morning, just as we find ourselves at the beginning of ordinary time, the green season, which is the seed-bed of the Church's annual cycle, that we should be halted in our steps by an invitation: come and you will see.

Each of the Mass readings today tells us something of what it means to be in relationship with God: whether we are at the start of a life-long journey like the child ¹Samuel, lying down to rest in God's presence, in the Lord's temple at Shiloh; or at a time when we ask and actively seek answers like the ²two disciples who sought out Jesus and asked him where he was staying; or at a time when we, perhaps, recognise that we need seek God no further afield than in our own hearts, since each of us is a ³temple of the holy Spirit.

For the Lord no longer dwells solely in Shiloh, nor in Jerusalem, as Jesus told the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well: *⁴believe me ... the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.* Similarly the Book of Deuteronomy invites us ⁵*to turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul,* suggesting that we really don't have to travel to the other side of the world *since the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for your observance.*

¹ 1 Samuel 3.3

² John 1.37

³ 1 Corinthians 6.19

⁴ John 4.21-24

⁵ Deuteronomy 30.10-14

Pseudo-Macarius, the 4th Syrian writer, whose homilies made John Wesley ⁶*sing for joy*, writes that ⁷*the human heart itself is but a small vessel, though it contains dragons and lions, poisonous beasts, all the treasures of evil, rough uneven roads and precipices. But, there is also God, the angels, the life and the kingdom, the light and the Apostles, the treasures of grace.*

And, today, Saint John offers us a glimpse of that kingdom, that place of God's dwelling. In his Prologue he writes: ⁸*No-one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.* And, towards the end of his Gospel, he tells us that at the Last Supper ⁹*one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved*, by tradition the Evangelist himself, *was lying close to the breast of Jesus.* And this detail, echoing the Prologue, takes us to the heart of John's message. Jesus dwelt in the bosom of his Father, in communion with his Father. And it is into that fellowship, that communion, that each of us, like John, the beloved disciple, is invited. We, too, may lie close to the breast of Jesus, in the bosom of the Father. We, too, are called to the *koininía*, to the fellowship of the Blessed Trinity.

Jesus was passionate about this. Much of his final discourse at the Last Supper is taken up with imagery of dwelling and abiding, of his unity

⁶ Diary entry for July 30th 1736

⁷ Homily 43.7

⁸ John 1.18

⁹ John 13.23

with his Father, a union he wishes to share with his ¹⁰friends, with those who do as he has commanded. He gives his life that we might be ¹¹one, even as the Father is in him and he in the Father, that we might be in them: that we might, individually and communally, witness to the eternal fellowship into which we are called.

The two disciples, invited to come and see, stayed with Jesus all that day. Then one of them, Andrew, went to seek out his brother, Simon, for staying with Jesus is not a “me-only” experience. It is a gift to be shared, an invitation for the present moment. For dwelling with God is to dwell in the present moment, in the here and now.

So, as we step out into this green time, let us take up the Lord’s invitation to be at home with Jesus and his Father, united in the Spirit that makes us one; and in that communion to witness reverently to the Kingdom today and every day.

¹⁰ John 15.14

¹¹ John 17.21