

Fr. Rudy's Reflections

The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 14, 2024

What Are You Looking For?

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

"Life is not primarily a quest for pleasure, as Freud believed, or a quest for power, as Alfred Adler taught, but a quest for meaning. The greatest task for any person is to find meaning in his or her life."

—Viktor Frankl, author, *Man's Search for Meaning*

Following his incarceration in a Nazi concentration camp in World War II, Victor Frankl published a bestselling book based on his experiences and the lessons he learned in surviving this horrific event. *Man's Search for Meaning* chronicled how human beings seek to connect to a purpose and intention in life, something to hold onto with a higher purpose and a positive framework in which to live. Having a *why* to live for enabled him and all those who suffered along with him to bear *the how*. This search can be found since the beginning of time and has traveled the long road of man who seeks to find a constant source of joy, truth, honesty, honor, and fulfillment. We know as Christians, however, that the answer can only be found by building a relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. How we do that is why we are here, the path to our salvation.

It is the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, and in the first chapter of John's Gospel, we witness Jesus's encounter with the first group of his many disciples: John the Baptist, Andrew, and Andrew's brother Peter. At the outset, we hear the words of John the Baptist as Jesus walks by: "Behold the Lamb of God." Indeed, in those poignant words, John's followers seem at once to be redirected to another source, the one who can give them what they need, *what we all need*.

Jesus asks a simple question, "What are you looking for," a question every person on earth has asked oneself at one time or another. In our grand search through life for meaning, we know this open-ended question has been posed through many frameworks—psychology, philosophy, self-help books, or self-introspection—the premise is the same, yet the answer is often onerous to find. Jesus says, "Come and see," an invitation to all of us to question our heart, our love, our motives, and find within ourselves what we truly want in life. Jesus does not lead us to thirst for the external pursuits of happiness such as power, money, ego, and other fleeting chases in life. Rather, in becoming his disciple, in how we live, work, love, and abide by our faith, we are led to a deeper and more intimate relationship with Jesus, one that we sought and now find, just as he told us we would do.

"Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened" (Matthew 7:7–8).

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Rudy