

15-01-17 - Epiphany 2
John 1.39

SSJM
come and see

Summer of 1960 - several weeks on Iona, staying in Abbey, working as an Abbey Guide - doing a tiny bit of reading in prep. for exams in early 1961 - learned much: *inter alia*, what Scottish people mean by the verb 'to stay'.

Question John's 2 disciples will mean something different in Scotland from what it probably means for us. Where are you staying = you're here for a visit, which hotel/guest house are you at, where's your friends' house whilst you are here. In Scotland = where do you live?

Scots have an advantage over English in this question. But in either case, an odd question. OLJC had been proclaimed as Lamb of God - a phrase full of depth, pointing to who OLJC was - might therefore have expected to ask deep questions, What's the meaning of life? Why's there so much suffering? Where's my dead relation/friend gone to? But no - Where are you staying, Where do you live? - and a very simple answer, Come and See.

Stayed there that day - not told what they did, but presumably they talked with him, ate and drank with him, learned more about him - simply spent time with him, getting to know him better.

And perhaps they answered as they did because they simply didn't realise who he actually was - perhaps they hadn't really understood John's description of him. Certainly it would appear that, having gone to his house, they did see truly and more fully who he was - because one of them, Andrew, went to fetch his brother and said, not We have found this man Jesus, but We have found the Messiah - for what more could a Jewish person want? Certainly Andrew bore witness to who Jesus was.

This story is the beginning of the story of the Church. For you and I, Christian people, are people who have in some

way or other heard about Jesus - perhaps from home, perhaps from Sunday School, possibly even from day school, perhaps from a friend - and having heard, we have come to him and seen for ourselves who he is - or at least have begun to see, for the full process of getting to know him and who he is takes a lifetime. Like those two, we have taken time to be with him and we continue to take time - why else are we here today?

But also we, having come and seen, are expected to follow OLJC and to invite others to come and see. For God depends on the Church, on us, to make Jesus known in the world today through our life and witness. For Christ has now no hands but our hands...

What a challenge this is to the Church! So it's worth reflecting, Do our words and deeds bear witness to OLJC? When/if we do get round to invite people to come, will they be able to 'see' him in us, in our congregation? Will people be able to say, Yes, he stays here, lives here, is here - yes, the Spirit that rested on Jesus is at work here, in the church of God that is in Seedfield, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints (taking up St Paul to the Corinthians) - OR: will they go away, still looking?