

Today is the memorial of Saint Francis de Sales, who in his lifetime was Bishop of Geneva. He is well known for his deep faith and his gentle approach in handling the religious divisions resulting from the Protestant Reformation. He is also known for his writings on spiritual topics.

He is often called “the gentleman saint,” because of his method of evangelization. For his time, too, he was unique in that he wrote books for the laity to assist them in growing spiritually.

Interestingly, in today’s First Reading, we hear again about David and Saul. Saul is relentlessly pursuing David in an attempt to kill him, and David continues to flee. Hiding in a cave, David gets an interesting upper hand in the battle.

Saul enters the cave for a potty break ... and while Saul is indisposed, David cuts the end off of Saul’s cloak. After Saul had left and was a distance off, David comes out of the cave holding the cloth to show Saul that he had the opportunity to kill him - but didn’t.

In this way, we see how God favors a gentle approach to handling our life’s situations.

Today’s Gospel reminds us that God calls us ... and Christ calls us ... by name. Jesus didn’t ask for resumes - seeking half-a-dozen fisherman, a couple of zealots, a twin, a foreigner, a tax collector, and a betrayer. Rather he called Simon, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, Thaddeus, Simon, and Judas.

In the same way, God works gently with us ... and God calls each of us by name. I didn’t answer an advertisement looking for skinny bald guys ... rather Christ called me ... and He is calling all of us ... to follow Him.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us pray that we might respond to God’s gentle call ... that we might hear Jesus call our name ... and when we do ... let us set aside anything that might keep us from ... following Him.