

Today I had an interesting phone call. I was interviewed by someone from the Catholic Weekly in anticipation of the ordination to priesthood scheduled for June 5. It's kind of odd being interviewed. Who? What? Why? When? Where? Lots of questions, and 45 minutes later, it was done.

But what it got me thinking was about what was it that led me to this point in my life. How does this happen.

The reporter asked me when was the big "decisive" moment – when did I get the call. And not expecting that, I paused and realized that it wasn't one specific big call, but rather a series of small, very consistent, very persistent calls. Which constituted the overall call to Holy Orders.

And since that phone call, I've been thinking about the little calls that have come during my life, and in reflection and retrospection it has occurred to me that sometimes I got it right, and sometimes I got it wrong. But God was patient with me and here I am 71 days, 17 hours, and 30 minutes away from an incredible, life-changing event.

Because when I got it right, was when I listened to God and acted on it. But when I got it wrong was when, although I knew what God was asking, I thought that I had a better idea.

In today's readings, we hear about Ahaz, who was king of Judea. He's out checking his water supply in preparation for battle, when the Isaiah is sent to him. Just before this text, Ahaz is given a word that if he only follows God's will, he and all of Judea will be safe. And what we hear is that God also offers a sign for Ahaz so that he will have more proof.

But Ahaz, mockingly, plays humble and says he doesn't want to tempt God. But he IS playing a game with God. Ahaz isn't really humble. And Ahaz had already decided to join with Assyria. He chose NOT to put his trust in God, but in the military power of another country.

Ahaz THOUGHT he had a better idea, BUT he didn't. So the sign he gets, in response to this BAD idea is something that would happen MANY, MANY centuries later.

In the Gospel, we hear the story of the Annunciation – the Angel Gabriel comes to Mary and tells her that she is to be the mother of the Savior. What is beautiful in this particular passage is that while Mary has NO idea how this is going to happen, she HEARS what God speaks through the angel and responds "Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord."

Mary realizes that she has NO idea that is better than God's plan. And so in humble, obedient submission, she responds "May it be done to me according to your word." The Psalm calls us to the same response – "Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will."

Let us pray that when we feel the gentle tug of God that we may respond, NOT with our own ... seemingly better ideas ... but that we will in humility let God be God, and actively respond to God's will. Let us pray to more readily accept our role as children of God, and pray to always respond to our loving God and Father the same way Our Lord Jesus Christ and Our Blessed Mother did: "Behold, I come to do your will."