

A Reflection from Fr. Joseph

Today's first reading describes the call of the young boy Samuel to be God's prophet. But today, I do not want to focus on Samuel. Instead, I want to examine another character of the story, Eli. Eli was the priest under whom Samuel apprenticed, while he was in the temple. We know from other passages of the bible that, at this time, Eli was eighty-eight years old and blind. In today's passage he performs his most important biblical action. He enables Samuel to recognize that God was calling him. When God calls Samuel, Samuel thinks that it is Eli calling him. Three times he runs to Eli and says: "**Here I am, for You called me.**" But the third time Eli recognizes what is happening. He tells Samuel that if he hears the voice again, he should respond, "**Speak LORD, for your servant is listening.**" So, when God calls Samuel the next time, he is ready. He responds and becomes the first great prophet of Israel.

The character of Eli reminds us that God may ask us to help someone understand their own calling. God may ask us to be an agent through whom another person recognizes God's will. This could happen in our own family, when a family member is stuck, unable to make the decisions that will allow life to move forward. It could happen with a close friend who is hurt by a person or a situation and now is unable to live because he or she cannot find the path to forgiveness. It could happen in our workplace or in our school when we see someone overwhelmed by their responsibilities, fighting to keep their head above water and wondering whether their life has a future. In any one of these circumstances and in many others, God may be asking us to give that person a little push in the right direction. God might be calling us to be an Eli and help someone else recognize God's will.

Two other insights flow from this story. The first is this: You do not need to be a perfect fit to undertake this helping function. Eli was eighty-eight years old and blind, but he had enough knowledge and insight to show Samuel what was happening. We do not need to be a perfect fit to help others. We might think, "I hardly know that person? Should not his or her family be the ones to give guidance?" We might believe that we are too old or too young to speak out, that we are not as educated, or outgoing as other people are. All of these things can be true, but God may still be calling us to help another person to find his or her way.

Secondly, we do not need to be successful on our first try. It took Eli three times before he figured out what Samuel needed to hear. Therefore, if we try to help someone else and are unsuccessful, it does not mean we have failed. God may provide other opportunities, and one of those opportunities may prove effective.

Today's first reading is rightly named, "The Call of Samuel." But we could also see it as, "The Call of Eli." Eli's role was necessary if Samuel was to understand his mission. So even if we are not a perfect fit, even if we tried before, God may still be asking us to reach out and help others, so that they may become the people that God wants them to be.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS

Mon. Jan. 15^h - 1 Samuel 15:16-23; Mark 2:18-22

Tue. Jan. 16th - 1 Samuel 16:1-13a; Mark 2:23-28

Wed. Jan. 17th - ST. ANTHONY, memorial

1 Samuel 17:32-33,37, 40-51; Mark 3:1-6

Thurs. Jan. 18th - 1 Samuel 18:6-9, 19:1-7; Mark 3:7-12

Fri. Jan. 19th - 1 Samuel 24:2-20; Mark 3:13-19

Sat. Jan. 20th - 2 Samuel 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27; Mark 3:20-21

Sun. Jan 14th - 3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

**ALTAR SERVERS**

Wed. Jan. 17th - 7 :30 PM - Volunteers

Sat. Jan. 20th - 5:00 PM - A & A Taban, C& C
Tang, J.Tuginay.

Sun. Jan. 21st - 9AM - Isaiah, Jonah & Norah

Chao, S.Cheung, A.Lee, A & A Chan. 11AM - K & K Bui,
N & N Sanchez, A & A Babas, W.Pham. 5PM - C & J Le,
C.Akol, J.Roque, J.Paja, D.Dang, J.Cayabyab, Z.Bambilla.

**PARISH ENVELOPES FOR 2024**

Have you picked up your new sets of parish envelopes? They are arranged alphabetically. If you have recently requested a set, you will also find them there. Anyone wishing envelopes for 2024, is asked to call the parish office.

**FEAST OF STO. NINO
SUNDAY, JAN. 28TH AT 5 PM**

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR MASS AT 5 PM
FOLLOWED BY A PROCESSION. ALL
ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND!**

SCHOOL NEWS

- **School Mass:** Please join us this Wednesday at 9 am.

- **St. Jude School Accepting new Applications**

We are now accepting new applications for the 2024-25 school year. If interested, please call the school office at 604-434-1633 for application form.

- **School tours:** Our Gr. 7 Student Ambassadors are available to provide tours of our school to prospective families. If you know of someone who might be interested in attending St. Jude School, please tell them to sign up for a tour. Any interested family can email registrar@stjude.ca to schedule a tour.

ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

Up-Coming Events

Stewardship Reflection

“Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, ‘What are you looking for?’” - John 1:38

When we recognize who we are, it’s easier to find what we are looking for. Once we see ourselves, and others, as children of God, we spend less time looking for the material comforts of the world. Instead, our hearts long for something deeper that can only be filled by God. Ask God daily how He wants you to live the life He intended for you.

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Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - Jan. 18 to 25

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an annual ecumenical celebration. Christians around the world are invited to pray for the unity of all Christians, to reflect on scripture together, to participate in jointly organized ecumenical services, and to share fellowship.

This year is between January 18th (the Feast of the Confession of Saint Peter) and January 25th (the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul).

Prayer Services will take place at SFU, UBC, Sacred Heart Delta, St. Anthony's West Vancouver, St. Ann's Abbotsford, St. Peter's New Westminister, and the John Paul II Pastoral Centre in Vancouver. Learn more and register at rcav.org/ecumenism-and-interfaith-relations

Weekend Getaway Marriage Conference

We are excited to partner with [Family Life Canada](http://FamilyLifeCanada.com) to offer weekend getaways to married couples in the Archdiocese of Vancouver! The Weekend Getaway is a marriage conference uniquely designed to enrich your relationship. For most couples, it’s a chance to reconnect, re-establish the foundation, and rekindle romance. For others, it’s a fresh start. For some, it will be the weekend that saves a marriage. The next getaway is on the weekend of Feb. 16-18, 2024 at the Fairmont Empress in Victoria. For info: beholdvancouver.org/events

Spiritual Care Training Program

Pope Francis has challenged everyone to think about their brothers and sisters in a new way as many are experiencing profound loneliness and isolation. The Archdiocese of Vancouver is offering the Spiritual Care Training Program as one way to answer this call.

The eight-week course teaches how to make yourself more available to seniors and others who can benefit from your genuine concern and presence in their lives. Some topics covered include aging, communication, boundaries and self-care. The training is offered online via Zoom every Thursday, from February 1 to March 21, from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Cost is \$30. Learn more and register at beholdvancouver.org/events

Pro-Life Mass and Prayer Vigil

Join us for a monthly Mass and vigil to pray for respect for all human life, from conception to its natural end. Hosted by the Archdiocese of Vancouver, it takes place on the first Saturday of each month. The next Mass and Vigil takes place on Saturday, February 3 at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Vancouver at 9:00 am. Learn more at beholdvancouver.org/events

Be a Vendor at the 2024 Catholic Educators Conference

Be a part of something truly special and grand. Register as a vendor at our 2024 Catholic Educators' Conference. This year's conference is on Thursday, February 24, 2024 at the Vancouver Trade & Convention Centre. Register online at cisva.regfox.com/cec2024

The Great Divorce: A Book Study for Young Adults

The Great Divorce by C.S. Lewis is the story of the journey of a man taking a bus ride from Hell to Heaven. Along the way, he follows several people who, upon arriving in Heaven, meet people and situations from their past lives.

Young adults aged 19-35 are welcome to a book study with the Religious Sisters of the Archdiocese. The next meeting is on Friday, Feb. 9 at 6:00 pm until 8:30 pm at the Vanspec Centre (2811 Venables Street, Vancouver). This is a great opportunity to connect with other young adults and the Religious Sisters of the Archdiocese in a discussion setting. It also offers a chance to go deeper in overcoming the struggles of living a Christian life in the modern world. Learn more and register online at beholdvancouver.org/events