

A Reading from the First Book of Samuel

During the time young Samuel was minister to the Lord under Eli, a revelation of the Lord was uncommon and vision infrequent.

One day Eli was asleep in his usual place. His eyes had lately grown so weak that he could not see. The lamp of God was not yet extinguished, and Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the Lord where the Ark of God was.

The Lord called to Samuel, who answered, "Here I am." He ran to Eli and said "Here I am, you called me." "I did not call you," Eli said. "Go back to sleep." So he went back to sleep. Again the Lord called Samuel who rose and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said, "you called me." But he answered, "I did not call you, my son. Go back to sleep." At that time Samuel was not familiar with the Lord, because the Lord had not revealed any thing to him as yet. The Lord called Samuel again, for the third time. Getting up and going to Eli, he said, "Here I am. You called me." Then Eli understood that the Lord was calling the youth. He said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'"

When Samuel went to sleep in his place, the Lord came and revealed his presence, calling out as before, "Samuel, Samuel!" Samuel answered, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

The Word of the Lord.

REFLECTION 1:

Just as God called Samuel's name, so too does God call the name of each of us. And just as Eli helped Samuel to recognize God's call to him, so too has each of us received the help of many people in recognizing God's call in our own lives. Let us be thankful for those who have been Ministers of the Call in our lives.

Let us be thankful for our families: our mothers and fathers, our sisters and brothers. They are the ones who first taught us what it means to be in relationship to another, to be cared for and to care. Let us be thankful for our homes, where we learned to laugh, to cry and to pray. Let us be thankful for our aunts and uncles and cousins, our family, friends and neighbors, all those with whom we first experienced community. Let us be thankful for the family with whom we now live: husbands, wives, children, community members and friends. Let us be thankful for all those family members who have been Ministers of the Call for us. **(Allow time for those present to reflect on the names of family members.)**

Let us be thankful for the ministers of the Church who have helped to form us and bring us to this day — teachers, youth ministers, parish priests, retreat ministers, lay ministers, religious sisters, brothers and priests. They are the ones who ministered to us in the name of the Church and who showed us what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. It was from them that we learned what it is to do ministry and to be a minister. Let us be thankful for our co-workers, those with whom we now minister. They are the ones who challenge us, support us, and encourage us. Let us be thankful for all those Church ministers who have been Ministers of the Call for us. **(Mention names of Church ministers through whom you have heard God's call.)**

Let us be thankful for those for whom we care, for they too help us to recognize the voice of God in our lives. Let us be thankful for the people who touch our lives now, those who are troubled and confused, those who are frightened and uncertain, those who are joyful and confident. Let us be thankful for the people who have welcomed us into their lives, and who have trusted us with their hopes and dreams. Let us be thankful for those who have shared their faith with us, and for those who have shared their doubt with us. Let us be thankful for all those who have looked to us to help them discover who God calls them to be. Let us remember all those to and for whom we minister and who have been Ministers of the Call for us. **(Mention names of the people you serve through whom you have heard God's call.)**

A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

As he was walking along the Sea of Galilee he watched two brothers, Simon now known as Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea. He said to them, "Come after me and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately abandoned their nets and became his followers. He walked along further and caught sight of two other brothers, James, Zebedee's son and his brother John. They too were in their boat, getting their nets in order with their father, Zebedee. He called them and immediately they abandoned boat and father to follow him.

Jesus toured all of Galilee. He taught in their synagogues, proclaimed the good news of the kingdom, and cured the people of every disease and illness. As a consequence of this, his reputation traveled the length of Syria. They carried to him all those afflicted with various diseases and racked with pain, the possessed, the paralyzed. He cured them all. The great crowds that followed him came from Galilee, the Ten Cities, Jerusalem, and Judea, and from across the Jordan.

The Gospel of the Lord.

A Reading from the Gospel according to John

As he walked along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, was it his sin or that of his parents that caused him to be born blind?"

"Neither,"

answered Jesus:

"It was no sin, either of this man or his parents.
Rather it was to let God's works show forth in him.

We must do the deeds of him
who sent me while it is day.

The night comes on
when no one can work.

While I am in the world
I am the light of the world."

With that Jesus spat on the ground, made mud with his saliva,
and smeared the man's eyes with the mud.

The Gospel of the Lord.