



So [Eli] said to Samuel,  
"Go to sleep, and if  
you are called, reply,  
'Speak, LORD, for your  
servant is listening.'"  
1 SAMUEL 3:9

## You Called?

**T**oday we focus on our call from God. Both Samuel and Jesus' disciples were called. Unfortunately, not everyone realizes he or she has been called to be a disciple. Pope Francis insists that by virtue of baptism we are all missionary disciples. What does this mean? What does it ask of us?

Today's readings set the stage for our consideration of discipleship. They tell us several things. As with Samuel, the invitation from God can be unexpected, for it can occur in the very ordinary events of life. Perhaps, like Samuel, we don't hear the call because the event is so ordinary. Maybe we need someone to open our eyes to God's presence in the ordinariness of life. But what do we expect a call from God to be? A thunderclap? A blinding light? Actually, when we realize we have been called by God, it is like a crash of thunder or a blinding light.

Intrigued by Jesus, the disciples wanted to hear more, and so they followed him. Frequently God speaks to us through the lives of other people. When we see goodness in them we too want to be good, to do good. This might prompt us to share what we have, to comfort those who suffer, to forgive those who have offended us. We may not yet know how to do it, but such goodness can touch us deeply. Do we listen, like Samuel? Are we open, like the disciples?

*Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA*

### FOR *Reflection*

- ★ *In the ordinariness of your life, what might actually be God's voice?*
- ★ *What kind of goodness attracts you?*

# Dear Padre,

## Can the Eucharist be celebrated outside of a church—for example, inside my home?

**W**hat an interesting question. The earliest celebrations of the Eucharist were held in the homes of the early Christians. As centuries evolved and the Christian population grew, larger rooms were rented and later built to house the community gathering. The word *church* is what we now call a building in which people worship. If we were to be completely accurate, we would call the building the house or shelter for the Church because the Church is understood primarily as the baptized community living in faith and charity.

Unfortunately, because of changing demographics and priest shortages, many communities are consolidating and church buildings are being shut down and even destroyed. As a result, communities and places for liturgy grow larger. Large communities can easily become impersonal and pastoral leadership increasingly difficult.

Recently, some large parishes have developed neighborhood communities in an attempt to subdivide into smaller faith-sharing units—not unlike the original house churches. These smaller communities gather for regular prayer and catechesis. The parish priest occasionally attends their meetings and celebrates the Eucharist with them. This is one example of celebrating the Eucharist outside of a church building.

So, although there can be exceptions for pastoral necessity, canon law indicates that celebrating Mass in a sacred place is the norm. The bishop may clarify this law for his own diocese to best meet the needs of his people while respecting the dignity of the Eucharist.

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### A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

*Jesus does not want disciples who are merely able to repeat memorized formulas. He wants witnesses: people who spread hope, with their way of welcoming, smiling, and loving; above all loving because the power of the resurrection makes Christians capable of loving even when love seems to have lost its motivation.*

GENERAL AUDIENCE, OCTOBER 4, 2017



## Calendar

### Monday

JANUARY 18  
Weekday  
Heb 5:1-10  
Mk 2:18-22

### Tuesday

JANUARY 19  
Weekday  
Heb 6:10-20  
Mk 2:23-28

### Wednesday

JANUARY 20  
Weekday  
Heb 7:1-3, 15-17  
Mk 3:1-6

### Thursday

JANUARY 21  
St. Agnes,  
Virgin and Martyr  
Heb 7:25—8:6  
Mk 3:7-12

### Friday

JANUARY 22  
Day of Prayer for the  
Legal Protection of  
Unborn Children  
Heb 8:6-13  
Mk 3:13-19

### Saturday

JANUARY 23  
Weekday  
Heb 9:2-3, 11-14  
Mk 3:20-21

### Sunday

JANUARY 24  
Third Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Jon 3:1-5, 10  
1 Cor 7:29-31  
Mk 1:14-20