

Who would believe the story of Samuel and Eli? Wouldn't you suppose that if God called you, you would know something very special had happened? Who would believe that God could call you and you wouldn't recognize that you were having a wild, spooky, religious experience? Who would believe that you could get the voice of God confused with the voice of the old guy in the neighboring room?

The answer is "Eli", the wise old priest who believes and understands that you can be in direct contact with God, and still not know that it is God who is talking to you. But ... if God's voice can be confused with some ordinary voice, how does anyone know when it is actually God calling?

You can't 'know' ..... Until you are willing to listen. God doesn't force monologues on the unwilling — he invites us to conversation. When Samuel is ready to tell God that he is willing to listen, then the real connection between him and God begins — and grows into a friendship, described best as "the Lord was with Samuel".

And the moral of the story? The voice of God can be anywhere, in any guise. It isn't thunder and lightning, or extraordinary psychic happenings, that connect a person to God. Rather, it is the willingness to listen, to trust and obey, that makes the Lord known.

**Eleanor Stump**, St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO  
(Sunday Website)

*Samuel ran to Eli and said,  
"Here I am. You called me."*

John Singleton Copley's  
"Samuel Waking Eli in the Night" (1780)



QUIEN CREERIA LA HISTORIA DE SAMUEL Y ELI? ¿No supondrías que si Dios te llama, tu sabrías que algo especial ha pasado? ¿Quién creería que Dios pudo llamarte y tu no podrías reconocer que, tu tuviste una experiencia religiosa incontrolable y misteriosa? ¿Quién creería que tu confundiste la voz de Dios con la voz de un hombre anciano en el cuarto de a lado?

La respuesta es "Eli" el viejo sabio sacerdote quien cree y entiende que tu puedes estar en contacto directo con Dios, y todavía sin saber que es Dios quien esta hablándote a ti. Pero ... si la voz de Dios puede ser confundida con alguna voz ordinaria, como alguien sabe cuando Dios ciertamente esta llamando?

Tu no puedes 'saberlo' .... Hasta que tu estes dispuesto a escucharlo. Dios no fuerza a monólogos indispuestos – el nos invita a conversar. Cuando Samuel esta preparado para decirle a Dios que el esta dispuesto a escuchar, entonces es cuando inicia una conexión real entre el y Dios – y crece a una amistad, descrita mejor como "el Señor estaba con Samuel".

¿Y la moral de la historia? La voz de Dios puede estar en cualquier lugar, en cualquier rostro. NO es trueno o relámpago, o un psíquico extraordinario, que conecte a una persona con Dios. En lugar de eso, es la voluntad de escuchar, de confiar y obedecer, lo que hace dar a conocer a Dios.

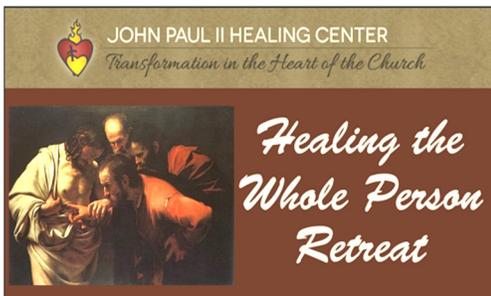
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## WE HAVE GUESTS ARRIVING!

The Interfaith Emergency Shelter is at St. Mark **January 22-29**, and volunteers are needed. Sign-ups will be in the vestibule after Masses — drop by the table to see how you can help out with the tasks involved in giving shelter to our less fortunate neighbors, and living out the Gospel of Jesus.



**CCS LAUNCHES kNOW POVERTY HOUR:** Catholic Community Services invites you to learn how we can make a difference and help those who live in poverty. kNOW POVERTY HOUR is on Feb. 1st, 5:00pm, at the Springfield Service Ctr. (1025 G St), and Feb. 8th, 5:00pm, at the Eugene Service Ctr. (1464 W 6th Ave). RSVP at: [events@ccslc.org](mailto:events@ccslc.org), or call Wendy at: 541-345-3628 x313.



### CHRIST HAS COME TO OFFER US NEW LIFE

In a world full of brokenness, we can allow Christ's divine love to bring the healing we ardently desire, and reclaim our whole human identity. Talks include: Introduction to Healing the Whole Person, Encountering the Father's Love, Prayer for Inner Healing, and Living in Freedom. Held at St. Alice on Thursday, **February 22** (check-in 5:30-6:30pm, presentation 6:30-9:30pm); Friday, **Feb. 23** (6:30-9:30pm), and Saturday, **Feb. 24** (8:00am-5:00pm ... lunch provided).

Online registration is \$145/person, and closes on Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>. Walk-up registration on opening evening (space permitting) is \$165. Partial scholarships available by request. To register online: <http://jpiihealingcenter.org/index.php/events/detail/healing-the-whole-person-springfield-or-....> For local questions, contact Danielle Plantz at: [dplantz@archdpdx.org](mailto:dplantz@archdpdx.org).

## FAITH SERIES: CATECHISM THROUGH THE YEAR

### WHERE IS PENANCE FOUND IN THE BIBLE?

Through the prophet Nathan, God confronts King David over grave sins: adultery and murder. The guilty sovereign responds by confessing his sin to the prophet and to God. Then he humbles himself by exchanging his royal raiment for humble sackcloth, and for a week he lies on the ground and refuses all food (2 Sm 12:13-17).

David is performing penance in his deep grief for his wrongdoing. His attitudes and behavior illustrate how genuine penance includes both interior and exterior aspects..... **Interior** penance is a conversion of the heart, a turning away from sin and toward God (Dt 4:29; Jos 24:23). It involves the penitent's intention to change his life, hoping in God's mercy, as we see in David's change of heart and reflected in his prayer of repentance, recorded in Psalm 51. **Exterior** acts of penance, include such actions as fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. These behaviors contain several purposes: the penitent's intention to change; detachment from the things loved too much; drawing closer to God; repairing damage caused by the sin; and participating in reparation to God, by and through, the means of Christ's own death on the cross, offered as reparation for mankind.

David's acts of penance are self-imposed, but Scripture shows us that sometimes God himself imposes penances on the guilty — some sort of labor or adversity, often connected to the natural consequences of the sin, that can serve a redemptive purpose if the sinner responds in the 'right' way. For example, the disobedient Israelites are forced to wander in the desert for forty years (Nm 14:26-35), and John the Baptist's father, Zechariah, is temporarily struck mute when he won't believe God's message to him (Lk 1:20,62-64).

Voluntary penance is at the heart of the season of Lent (and even for Advent), when Catholics traditionally make at least small sacrifices in the hope of becoming more like our Lord. In the sacrament of Reconciliation, the priest assigns a penance on God's behalf, to help the penitent grow in holiness.

### RECOMMENDED READING: Excerpt taken from The NEW Catholic Answer Bible

Ex 32:15-20 · Nm 5:5-7; 14:19-23 · Is 58:6-7 · Jl 1:13-14 · Jon 3:1-10 · Zec 7:5-10 · Mt 6:16-21; 10:38; 16:19,24; 18:18 · Lk 18:9-14 · Jn 20:23 · Rom 8:13,17 · 1 Cor 5:1-5 · 2 Cor 4:10; 11:23-30 · Gal 6:1 · Phil 3:10 · Col 1:24 ·

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