

Wednesday of the First Week in Ordinary Time

Homily of Bishop Barres

St. Agnes Cathedral

January 10, 2024

The story of Samuel and Eli and the call of God in the first Book of Samuel never fails to move us.

Each of us has a deep and powerful baptismal call to heroic holiness and mission.

It is a call that is deeply personal and also deeply ecclesial.

Each of us has a vocation.

Each of us has an ecclesial mission.

God comes to us in deep and powerful ways throughout the different stages and seasons of our lives.

God is calling us at every moment with the same power with which he calls the young Samuel in the Old Testament Book of Samuel.

Eli, the mentor in the first Book of Samuel, helped Samuel to hear the call of God.

We too have mentors in life that help us to hear the call of God.

We too have been mentors and helped others to hear the call of God.

I recently met a young man Daniel in his mid 20s. He is a graduate of Regis in Manhattan and Brown University.

He now is a Fellowship of Catholic University Students missionary at Columbia University on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

Daniel clearly has a vocation and call to marriage.

He described how he first met his fiancé in the chapel at Brown University during Covid.

She was the lector one day at Mass and from the very beginning he had a strong intuition about her.

Their relationship matured in their time at Brown and they will be married this June.

Like Samuel, Daniel and his fiancé have had these “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening” moments as they discerned their vocation to holiness and mission in the Sacrament of Marriage.

Answering a call to the Sacrament of Marriage, to the Sacrament of Holy Orders, to Religious Life or the Single Life involves embracing the rhythm of Our Lord’s Paschal Mystery.

The Death and Resurrection of Jesus guides our souls.

It guides our fidelity to our vocation and the call to holiness in our vocation.

Today, each one of us gives thanks for our call and thanks for our vocation.

Together, we proclaim with young Samuel: “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.”