

# A Bible Bullet (aimed at the heart)

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B  
1Sam 3:3-10,19; 1Cor 6:13-15,17-20; John 1:35-42

Long ago and far away, I was a sophomore at St. Mary Academy in Portland, Oregon. The Holy Names Sisters teach there to this day. It continues as an all-girls high school.

My best friend, Jan, an early voice of reason in my life, was in the same Geometry class with me. Sr. Helene Rose asked us to prove that a particular line was a straight line. The class shared many ideas, none of which satisfied Sister. Jan reached the end of her patience, raised her voice slightly and said, "Sister, can't you see it?"

Seeing vs. knowing is very much a part of Sunday's readings. In the First Book of Samuel, young Samuel does not recognize the voice of the Lord calling him in the night. The old priest, Eli, has been around the bend and back with the Lord. He has spent his life serving the Lord in the Temple. He has caused great misfortune to his household by honoring his sons' desires over God's. Eli knows God and knows how he has failed God. But his past sin does not erase years of knowing the Lord.

When young Samuel seeks Eli's help after being called by God for the third time the Scripture tells us:

*At that time Samuel was not familiar with the Lord, because the Lord had not revealed anything to him yet....Eli understood that the Lord was calling the youth.*

Eli's heart knew the Lord. Isn't that our wish for the children?

In the Gospel, John the Baptist knows immediately upon seeing Jesus walking that Jesus is the Lamb of God. The message was

written on John's heart. It was there because he had spent his life searching the heart of God.

In a book by Henry Blackaby, the author says that God's purpose in revealing Himself in Scripture is to ready the one who studies His word to be encountered by God. Our job is to prepare the children to be encountered by God. That is the job of parents and catechists. We must ready them to recognize the voice of God. To do this, we must ready ourselves first.

The steps to do this are illustrated by the Gospel reading. Sr. Joan Mitchell, CSJ, writes commentary for Sunday by Sunday. Her reflection on the Gospel offers a pithy summation of the message. The first step is to follow the path Andrew took. He had listened to John the Baptist when John called Jesus the Lamb of God. So to HEAR is the first step. Next, Andrew approached the Lord who asks, "What do you seek?" To SEEK the Lord is the next step. Jesus invited them to find out what he was all about. "COME AND SEE," is the next step. Finally, once the initial introduction is complete, the real test begins. Can you STAY? Through good times and bad, can you stick with the faith with which you began? If we cannot STAY, perhaps it was not faith at all, but only curiosity. Our children are watching us to find out.