

# Mission Connections: Special Catechetical Leaders Edition

## Youth Connecting in Mission

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### Here I Am, You Called Me.

Here we are, once again in “Ordinary Time.” For some, this liturgical season feels non-exciting—the “high” feast days are done or not yet, the “special” colors are packed away in our worship spaces, the “big” projects and pushes are waiting for the next “extraordinary” time. And to be honest there was a time I felt the same, not feeling excited about the “ordinary” days of green in our church year. I feel differently now.

I have come to see how truly *extraordinary* our “ordinary” lives are—the daily routine of caring for children or elderly parents, making things or serving others at our every-day jobs, getting to encounter people of all differences during tasks as regular as running to the store. All of these things, and so much more, are daily, regular, “ordinary.” And yet, they are incredibly *holy*. For they are all a part of our callings—our vocations lived out, the in-breaking of grace in every moment. Jesus calls us in each and every of these “ordinary” days and ways.

In this weekend’s readings, we hear of GOD calling Samuel. What I love about this Scripture is that Samuel was *sleeping* when GOD called him. Though he was in the temple, he wasn’t participating in some “extra-ordinary” form of prayer or activity, not celebrating a high feast day or working towards a big event. GOD called Samuel both during, and out of, his ordinary activity:

*Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the LORD  
The LORD called to Samuel, who answered, "Here I am."  
Samuel 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 Eli answered, "I did not call you, my son. Go back to sleep."  
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.  
So 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."  
Samuel grew up, and the LORD was with him,  
not permitting any word of his to be without effect.*

Sometimes it is in the most “ordinary” of times that we encounter GOD in the deepest ways; and sometimes we are called to wake *out of* our “ordinary” in order to do something *extraordinary*; often the two go hand-in-hand. This week we end National Migration Week, we celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, we get ready for the anniversary of Roe vs Wade, and we do all of this while continuing to live our “ordinary” lives. Through it all, there are so many opportunities to say “yes” to GOD’s call. I invite you to be on the listen for the ways, like Samuel, in which GOD may be calling you to find extraordinary holiness in your “ordinary” this week.

Our callings are where we put our discipleship into action; there is nothing “ordinary” about that! And yet it is precisely this ordinary where GOD calls us, where He invites us to enter even more fully in service to Him and His people, where he begs us say, “**Here I am!**” How will you respond?

#### Don't Forget:



**Jan 7-14:** National Migration Week

**Jan 15:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**Jan 27:** Catholic Charities’ Mardi Gras fundraiser

**Jan 28-Feb 3:** Catholic Schools Week

**Feb 3-6:** Catholic Social Ministry Gathering in D.C.; pray for representatives of our faith who will be doing advocacy on the Hill.

**Feb 14:** Ash Wednesday; Lent and Rice Bowl begin



#### Mission Education Resources:

Pope Francis’ “Share the Journey” campaign continues on. Additionally, the United States Bishops have been recognizing National Migration Week in early January for almost 50 years now. Find resources to support this endeavor we join in as both global and US Catholics in another toolkit found at: [www.sharejourney.org/resource-library/national-migration-week-toolkit/](http://www.sharejourney.org/resource-library/national-migration-week-toolkit/)

Maryknoll Mission Education announces a new resource motivated by love, inspired by the Gospel and guided by our Catholic identity. The *Discover Your Neighbor* program empowers young people to be agents of encounter and transform our world! Find activities and lessons available for free at: <https://discoveryourneighbor.org>

#### Give it a Try!

*Try incorporating these resources and activities into your ministry.*



Share the Journey

#### Mission Activity Ideas:

With the next liturgical season quickly approaching, it’s not too early to begin thinking about how you will offer sacrifice this Lent. Catholic Relief Services’ Rice Bowl offers wonderful opportunities to do so! In addition to sharing the recipes and stories that CRS puts out (visit [www.crsricebowl.org](http://www.crsricebowl.org)), also try promoting a “Rice Meal Project;” encourage families (or do so as a community) to choose one meal each week to *eat only rice*. It’s a great way to learn more about hunger and simplicity, as well as to gather funds (the money saved on groceries each week) for our brothers and sisters in need. Remember that 25% of Rice Bowl funds stay within our diocese to help fight hunger, while 75% are shared globally.

