



# Dear Padre,

*If St. Matthew was an apostle, why do we have Gospels from other writers who were not apostles of Jesus? Since he knew Jesus personally, wouldn't his Gospel be the definitive one?*

There are two assumptions that need to be addressed. One is that the Apostle Matthew is the same as the evangelist Matthew. The book's title, the Gospel According to Matthew, was added to the text in the second century. Whether it was written by the same Matthew or someone else, it still traces back to the experience of the apostles. The Scriptures are the inspired word of God, and Christians can rely on the truth of the Gospel message through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The other assumption is that one Gospel is somehow more "definitive." All four Gospels are the inspired word of God. A Gospel is not a history of the life of Christ. It is a collection of stories that each evangelist arranged in a specific way so that they would make sense to a particular audience. For the Gospel of Matthew, the audience was predominantly Jewish, but these Jewish Christians were being excluded from mainstream Judaism and perhaps were wondering among themselves if Jesus was really the Messiah for whom they had waited so long. Matthew's Gospel asserts repeatedly that Jesus is a true Israelite who fulfills Old Testament prophecies, while also reinterpreting the Law of Moses in a new direction that includes all nations. ●



FRESCO OF APOSTLE ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST BY PIETRO GAGLIARDI / RENATA SEDWAKOVA

The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org

## A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS



*May the Virgin Mary help us make of our lives a hymn of praise to God in response to his call and in the humble and joyful fulfillment of his will. But let us remember this: there was a moment in each of our lives in which God made himself present more strongly, with a call.*

ANGELUS, ROME,  
JANUARY 17, 2021

### MONDAY

January 15  
Weekday  
1 Sm 15:16-23  
Mk 2:18-22

### TUESDAY

January 16  
Weekday  
1 Sm 16:1-13  
Mk 2:23-28

### WEDNESDAY

January 17  
St. Anthony, Abbot  
1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51  
Mk 3:1-6

### THURSDAY

January 18  
Weekday  
1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7  
Mk 3:7-12

### FRIDAY

January 19  
Weekday  
1 Sm 24:3-21  
Mk 3:13-19

### SATURDAY

January 20  
Weekday  
2 Sm 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27  
Mk 3:20-21

### SUNDAY

January 21  
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Jon 3:1-5, 10  
1 Cor 7:29-31  
Mk 1:14-20

## DAYbreaks

Leading Catholic voices inspire the faithful with daily reflections and prayers for Advent and Lent. Including: Fr. Ron Rolheiser, Dr. Mary Katharine Deeley, Sr. Dianne Bergant, Fr. Paul Turner, and more. Available from Liguori Publications.



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# Our Parish COMMUNITY

January 14, 2024

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19 / 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20 / John 1:35-42



## A Haunting Question

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**“W**hat are you looking for?” asks Jesus of the two disciples who come to see who he is and what he is about. They are Jesus’ first words in John’s Gospel, and that’s what the entire Gospel of John is about, an answer to that piercing question.

I spent the week living with that question, never really finding an answer that seemed to fit, or perhaps I got too many answers, all of them somehow falling short. Why do I spend an hour early each morning sitting in the silence? I read some Scripture, but then mostly I sit with the silence. Many are the times when my mind drifts to other times and places and daydreams. Sometimes the silence is scattered with boredom; at other times it stumbles with prayerful words; and sometimes in the silence I look for answers to the plaguing whys of life. Mostly, though, I sit in the silence. I’d like to call it prayer, but then I wonder if I’m simply floundering in wishful thinking. So I return to that haunting question—“What are you looking for?”

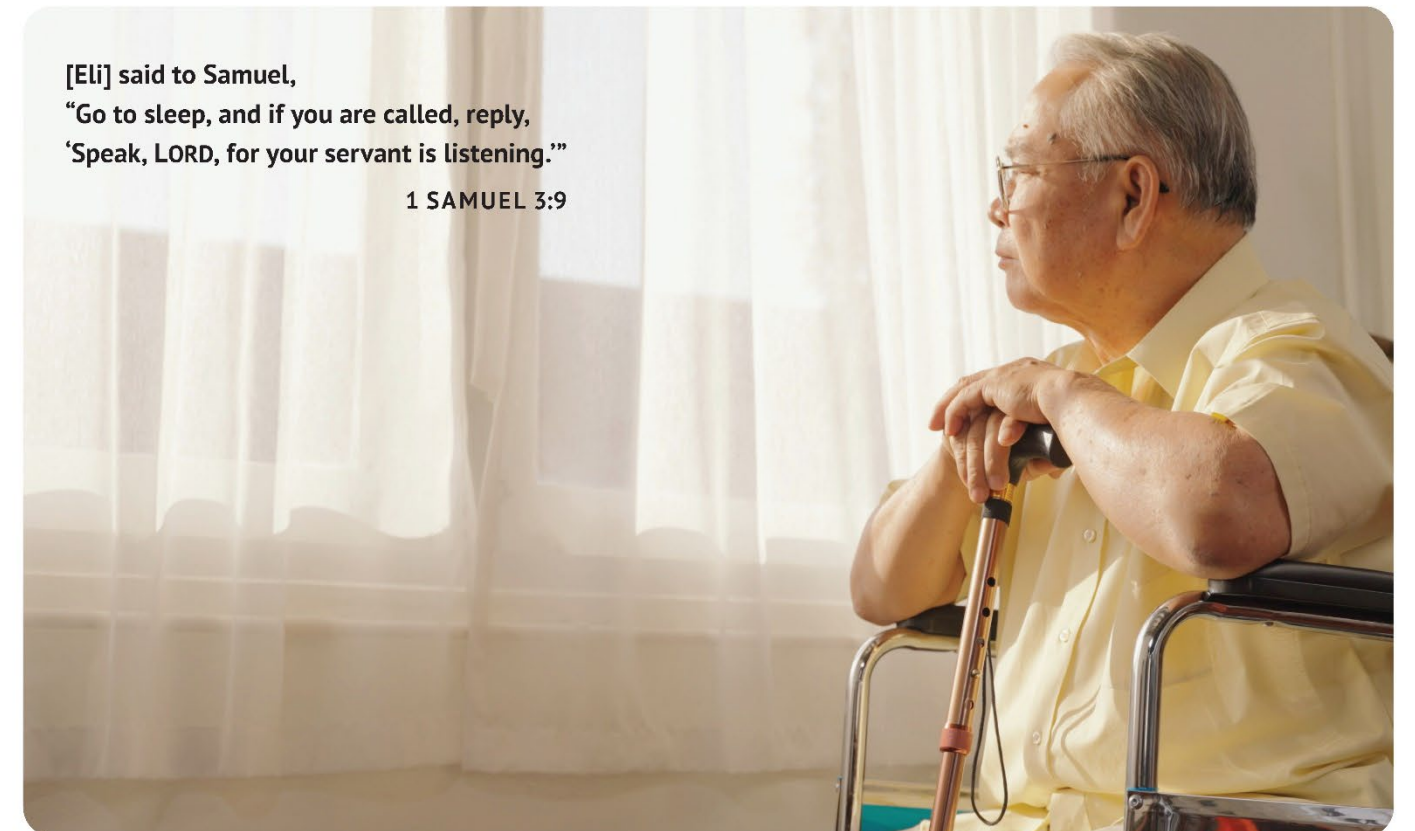
I think perhaps the answer is similar to what I look for when I gather with friends. Sometimes the get-together is engaging, but not always. Sometimes it is memorable, but not always. Sometimes we just hang out, and that can be enough. Ultimately relationships keep me grounded. That also is why I spend time in the silence. It’s what I’m looking for when I pray—to be in relationship with God, to be grounded lest I drift away and grow lost. ●

### Reflect

When you pray, what are you looking for?

[Eli] said to Samuel,  
“Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply,  
‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’”

1 SAMUEL 3:9



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