

Fourth Wednesday of Advent, December 22, 2021 Samuel 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56

Prayers, praise and thanksgiving!! This exaltation of love for the Lord is intrinsically one within our souls. An all-consuming shout for joy, impossible to simply describe as a thought or a feeling. This deep exaltation is heard in the exclamation of Mary's Magnificat and in Hannah's song of praise. Like no other, these prayers of praise and thanksgiving resound in words of love for a life fulfilled. God's gift treasured and offered up to God with gratitude. This can be likened to the words we often hear prayed at Mass, "what shall I ever return to the Lord for all that has been given to me?" This becomes the beacon for our lives, knowing the gift and using the blessings to make our return to the Lord.

Samuel too, experienced that call we know from his words, "Speak Lord, for your servant is listening."

Like Samuel, we can only pray that each of us return the gifts to answer God's call and to fulfill God's plan for our salvation. We each play a role.

My life has been filled with many gifts, personally, professionally and in volunteer ministry at Holy Name Cathedral. I pray that I am using those gifts to the fullest in my relationships, my work environment and in all the encounters through the love of Jesus Christ.

Join me in prayer for the graces to know the gifts given, to feel the love, and to pray that our return fulfills God's plan.

With love and gratitude.

Holy Name Parishioner *Julie Yacopino*.