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Have you ever stopped to ponder the unique purpose God has for you on this earth? Or perhaps, you already know your calling, but find it hard to follow. I have often joked, saying how I wish God would speak to me directly or even descend from the heavens on a pearly ladder and physically point me in the right direction. After all, there are several instances in Scripture when God speaks directly to His people.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells His disciples, "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." How often does He say this to us? How often does He whisper the words into our hearts? We know from the story of Elijah on the mountaintop in First Kings, Chapter 19, that we do not have to hear the words of God spoken audibly to know that He is calling us, to know that He loves us.

How often have we too had our mountaintop experiences -- in Church retreats, Christ Life Sessions, or participations in the Mass? We know we must descend the lofty mountain to share our experiences. It is so easy to slip into judgment and condemnation. God understands. He chose to become one of us and to die as one of us, because of His total love for us. He also made manifest His Father's plan for us: that we would love others in the same way He loves us and His Father.

So, now, when we behold our Savior in the Eucharist, in the needy, in the downtrodden, or in every single face in the crowd, we too, can hear His words to us, maybe not audibly, but internally. "Be merciful. Stop judging. Stop condemning. Forgive. Love."