

# livingtheword

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Hearing and Living the Sunday Readings

## Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

### Reading 1 1 Kgs 19:9a, 11-13a

At the mountain of God, Horeb, Elijah came to a cave where he took shelter. Then the LORD said to him, "Go outside and stand on the mountain before the LORD; the LORD will be passing by." A strong and heavy wind was rending the mountains and crushing rocks before the LORD— but the LORD was not in the wind.

After the wind there was an earthquake—but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake there was fire— but the LORD was not in the fire. After the fire there was a tiny whispering sound. When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went and stood at the entrance of the cave.

### Reading II Rom 9:1-5

Brothers and sisters:

I speak the truth in Christ, I do not lie; my conscience joins with the Holy Spirit in bearing me witness that I have great sorrow and constant anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh.

They are Israelites; theirs the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; theirs the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

## Reflection Process / Questions

- 10 mins Reading - underline a word or idea that strikes you
  - 10 mins Writing - write what you have heard, write your response to a reflection question(s) that attracts your attention
  - 10 mins Sharing / Praying - share with a friend or pray to God about livingtheword you have heard.
- The mountain of Horeb was another term for the famous Mt Sinai where Moses met face to face with God. Unlike Moses, Elijah is being chased. He challenged the Queen for putting statues of Baal in the temple, killed 400 Baal prophets and is running frightened in the desert. He seeks God. He experiences God in the 'tiny whispering sound' of God's voice in prayer. Have you had an experience of doing something for God and it meets resistance? Where do you go to seek God? What would you say you have heard recently from God?
  - In St Paul's letter to the Romans, chapters 9-11 reflect a great sadness that the Jewish people - Paul's own people - have not recognised and believed in Jesus. Have you experienced sorrow and anguish for someone who has not believed in Jesus or has left their christian faith? Consider placing them before God in prayer. Paul used this anguish to become an incredible missionary and very talented in preaching in a relevant way. How could you be more missionary?

## Gospel Mt 14:22-33

After he had fed the people, Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray.

When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. At once Jesus spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."

Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught Peter, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God."



"But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened."  
Matthew 14:30

- After feeding the 5000 people start to suggest that Jesus is the long awaited messiah. This has dangerous consequences. Herod, who has just killed John, could be identifying Jesus as the next target and threat to his power. He 'compels' (in the greek) the disciples to leave. Dissolves the crowd and goes up the mountain to pray. Not only does he wish to mourn the loss of John his close friend and cousin. He is also teaching the disciples about mission (Mt 14) and seeks to be grounded in prayer with God.

- A boat tossed about in the sea has always been an early symbol of the Church. In the middle east the rough sea was considered a symbol of darkness and chaos. Throughout history many storms have caused the Church to cry out to Jesus for help. Walking on water is a display of Jesus' power over all chaos and darkness along with his use of the Divine Name 'It is I'. A simplification of the divine name given to Moses on Mt Sinai. While the english uses 'tossed about' the greek word is literally 'tortured'. What forces torture you and the church today? Imaginatively enter the boat scene and hear Jesus personally say the words ' Take courage, do not be afraid' to you. What would this mean for you?
- Peter represents church leadership but also the individual disciple. Urged to take the risk of obedience to Jesus' word the 'walk on the water to Jesus' can be sunk by dwelling on the experience of strong winds and big waves. Problems. Fear. Sinking. What could you pray for God to 'save' the Church from today? Save you from today?
- Jesus is invited into the boat. The storm calms. Their crisis and Jesus' help leads them to bow down humbly. Have you had an experience like this?
- What is one action that you will do to 'livetheword' this week?