



Wait for the Lord

This Sunday's liturgy brings us face-to-face with Elijah as he listened for the voice of God. Finally, God chose to reveal himself 'in the sound of a gentle breeze' (1 Kings 11:12).

Elijah's faith, courage and determination were restored, and he resumed his mission of condemning King Ahaz and Queen Jezebel, and all the wrongdoing that surrounded them.

No Sign of Him

Crises, fear, uncertainty and relationship problems, financial stress and worry, misunderstanding and hurt, work-issues and pressures can all drive us into dark and seemingly hopeless places. At times like this, God seems very distant. We experience an emptiness that unsettles us deeply, even though ...

'God is not far from us. The One who dwells in heaven has come down to earth; he became man. He has torn down walls and shortened distances...' (Pope Francis: 26th January 2020)

... In a Silent Church

The ups and downs of daily living challenge our commitment, creativity, tenacity, courage and faith. However, like Elijah, we listen for the still, small voice. It may be found in the sensitive ear of a trusted friend, or in the quiet, restful few minutes in church, or in reading some lines from a favourite Psalm, or listening to extracts from 'Elijah', or by 'letting off steam' with a brisk walk in a calming forest. So often, the 'God of surprises' meets us in ordinary uneventful moments and in the most unexpected places and situations.

*I saw them kneeling,
climbing and prostrate –
It was love, love, love, they found.*

*Love that is Christ green walking from the summer
headlands In his scarecrow cross in the turnip-ground'*
(Patrick Kavanagh, *Pilgrims*)

Alone With None But Thee My God

The image of Jesus withdrawing into the hills to pray, to be alone with God, to be nourished, reassured and energised, reminds us that we are never alone.

*'Let us make room inside ourselves for the word of God! ...
We will discover that God is close to us, that he dispels our
darkness and, with great love, leads us into deep waters.'*

(Pope Francis, *Ibid.*) ■

Summary

Like Elijah, we listen for the still, small voice of God. It may be heard in the words of a trusted friend, or in a few restful minutes in a church.

Question

Why does God feel so far away, even though we know he is very near?

Prayer

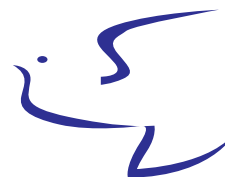
Lord, make your presence felt whenever I need it.



Issued "Cum Permissu Superiorum" by Rollebon Press, Dominican Priory, Tallaght Village, Dublin 24; Tel: (+353-1) 404 8100 or (+353) 087 284 1341; Fax: (+353-1) 404 8192.; email: rollebonpress@eircom.net

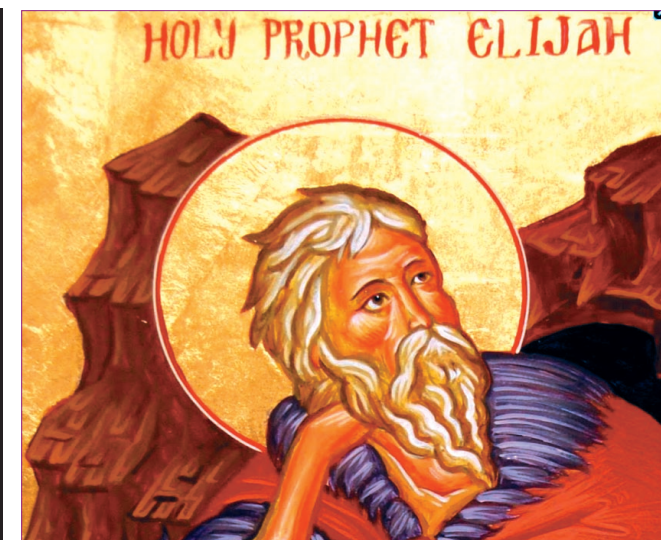
Nihil Obstat: John Harris OP; Printed in Ireland; some graphics are copyright 123RF. Vol.41; No.37; Nineteenth Sunday of Year A; 9 Aug 2020; Readings: 1Kings 19:9,11-13, Psalm 84, Romans 9:1-5, Matthew 14:22-33; Next Week: Interfaith Dialogue.

Sat 8 Aug St Dominic : Sun 9 Aug Ordinary 19 : Mon 10 Aug St Lawrence : Tue 11 Aug St Clare : Wed 12 Aug Jane Francis de Chantal; Muredach; Attracta; Lelia (Cloyne, Killala Dedn Cathd) : Thu 13 Aug Pontian & Hippolytus; (Ross-St Fachtna) : Fri 14 Aug Maximillian Kolbe : Sat 15 Aug Assumption (Galway-Dedn Cathd) : Sun 16 Aug Ordinary 20.



SUNDAY LETTER

Series: Scripture; Nineteenth Sunday of Year A; 9 Aug 2020



Many years ago, when I first heard Mendelsohn's oratorio, 'Elijah', the title role was sung by that great Irish Bass, the late William Young.

It was a deeply moving and spiritual experience. Many of Mendelsohn's arias and choruses capture beautifully the challenges and struggles that the prophet Elijah faced while on his mission.

Elijah (his name means 'Yahweh is my God') was on the run from the vengeful Queen Jezebel, so he undertook a pilgrimage to Mount Horeb. Along the way he experienced discouragement, depression and fear. But he was a man of faith and never gave up. He prayerfully pleaded:

*'Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel.
O hear me and answer me ...'* (1 Kings 18:37)

He longed for the people of Israel to abandon their false gods, and that God himself would ...

*show his people that Thou art the Lord
and let their hearts again be turned.* (1 Kings 18:37)

Help Will Come

When he reached Mount Horeb, Elijah hid in the darkness of a cave, feeling abandoned and forsaken. But an angel visited him and assured him of God's caring presence and loving protection. In Mendelsohn's music, this event is portrayed in the gentle and peaceful aria:

*'O rest in the Lord,
wait patiently for him ...'*