



*Reflection on the Scriptures of the Day*  
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*Friday of the Tenth Week in Ordinary Time*

Today's Readings blend seeking and solace in the Lord with some very clear directives. When I read the first reading, I can really feel for Elijah. He did everything he was supposed to do and was "most zealous for the LORD." Fleeing for his life, Elijah goes to a cave to hide. There, the word of the Lord came to him and challenged him to go out and stand on the mountain before God. Elijah retreated to a sacred place to find the Lord. But God does not appear in what might be considered a "normal" appearance. How often do we seek our own special place where we can feel the presence of God?

Our smartphones, tablets, and computers remind me of the biblical wind, fire and earthquake that Elijah experienced. Our devices clutter our lives and block our access to the "tiny whispering sound" – the voice of God. As a society, we tend to not want to deal very well with solitude and silence. When we come home, we turn on the TV, radio, or stereo for background noise. Most stores feature music to enhance our shopping experience. This reading, however, teaches us that we can't hear the voice of God except in silence. It reminds me of our annual retreat at Malvern where those on retreat are constantly being reminded how important silence is.

In the Gospel we encounter Jesus preaching to his disciples about the moral teachings in Jewish Law. He invites us as he invited his disciples not to get caught up in the letter of the law, but to go further, deeper into the spirit of the law. We are asked to recognize that sin is not just the external, what other people see, but also the internal, our motivations. Jesus invites us to go to the root of our sin, to go into ourselves and pray for the grace to recognize the origin of our shortcomings.

In the broader sense, this reading helps us to put our human frailties into perspective. It is essential that we take an honest look into our behavior and the necessary steps to make changes for the better.

As we reflect on these readings Lord, render us open to your word as the Prophet Elijah was. Help us to discover your word especially amid the noise and fury of our busy lives which tend to drown out your word, that quiet, still voice that we need so much to hear.

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