



From the Desk of Father Ring

Breaks Down Scripture - Where to Look

God can break into our awareness in countless ways. Our 1st reading this weekend names two ends of the spectrum. At the mountain of God in the desert, when God delivered the commandments, Moses and Elijah's ancestors experienced God's presence in powerful, dramatic signs. Yet for Elijah, while there was a powerful, crushing wind, followed by an earthquake, it was the tiny, whispering sound, the sound of sheer silence, the calm in the midst of the storm through which God spoke. That silent, divine presence lifted Elijah's fear and depression, putting him back on his feet. Between those two ends of the spectrum, there are countless ways God can reach out to us; dramatic events, or the most ordinary aspects of our daily life. More on drama, read I Kings 18-19. For the quiet ways, pray psalm 131 slowly and prayerfully.

Speaking of Drama

In the letter to the Romans, St. Paul wrestles with how so many of his beloved Jewish brothers and sisters could reject Christ. Do they still fit in God's plan? How? Lest those he wrote to think it just an academic exercise, he makes his passion for his people clear in our second reading. Then he lists all that is theirs. A prayer in the Good Friday Intercessions was changed in 1970, better



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acknowledging all that God has given to Paul's kindred, our brothers and sisters of the Jewish faith: "...for the Jewish people, the first to hear the word of God, that they may continue to grow in the love of his name and faithfulness to his covenant."

Walking on Water

Not unlike the first reading, in our Gospel we have a fierce storm, followed by a reassuring calm. Yes, that is life. The Gospel also offers another vivid picture. Peter with strong faith and courage, eyes fixed on Jesus, ready to jump out of the boat and come to Jesus. He did walk on water! Next we see the other part of Peter, taking his eyes off Jesus, focusing instead on the surging waves, fearful he might drown. By God's grace, as he faltered and began to sink, he knew what to do: Call out for help, "Lord, save me!" Lord, help us to have courage to step out in faith. When we falter, when we are sinking, help us to remember to call out for help. Then help us realize that the hand that reaches out to lift us may be a friend or family member who you have sent. Finally, help us to discover as well that sometimes you want us to be the hand that reaches out to someone who is drowning.

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