

14 June 2024 - Friday of the 10th even-numbered week

[1 Kings 19, 9a.11-16; Matthew 5, 27-32](#)

Homily

Elijah was a prophet powerful in word and deed. When he had the word of God, he did not hesitate to strike down the enemies of the Lord. In the first reading of the Mass a few days ago, we saw him slay the 450 priests of Baal with his own hands. Queen Jezebel, who was protecting these prophets of Baal, wanted to get rid of Elijah. So Elijah fled. After a few days walking in the desert, he was exhausted and discouraged. He received no more word from God. He found himself weak and fearful like all men. He simply received enough food to continue his journey to Horeb. In reality, in this symbolic journey, Elijah has retraced the path of the Exodus from Moses' meeting with Yahweh on the same Mount Horeb.

So what happens? First there is a hurricane so violent that it splits the mountains and shatters the rocks, then an earthquake, then fire. But God was not in any of these signs, which corresponded to what Elijah had been up to that point. God is not in violence. And then there was 'the murmur of a gentle breeze'; and God was in that gentle breeze. And Elijah entered into a dialogue with God: and he was transformed by this encounter.

When God asks him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?', he proclaims his jealous ardour for the Lord, claiming to be the only prophet to have remained faithful. God does not even respond to this arrogant claim. He simply sends Elijah back to his mission with the people. But this mission will only last a short time, since he is already called upon to consecrate his successor, Elisha.

It is easy to see in this story a description of any authentic spiritual journey. A passage from violence to tenderness, from self-confidence to fear and humility, and to the gradual discovery of the primacy of the mission over whoever is at the service of that mission and whoever is called to disappear to make room for someone else. The same teaching that John the Baptist would later give.

We are all called to set out again for Horeb, the mountain of the Lord, far from all the violent winds and earthquakes that stir our hearts, to meet God in the whisper of a gentle breeze and to hear our name and our mission repeated there - a mission that is greater than ourselves and of which we are but the humble and fleeting servants.

Document extrait du [site de l'abbaye Notre-Dame de Scourmont](#), qui se trouve sur le territoire de Forges, à sept kilomètres au sud de la ville de Chimay, en Belgique. Notre-Dame de Scourmont est une abbaye de l'Ordre Cistercien de la Stricte Observance.

Armand Veilleux