

Stewardship Reflection on Lectionary Readings

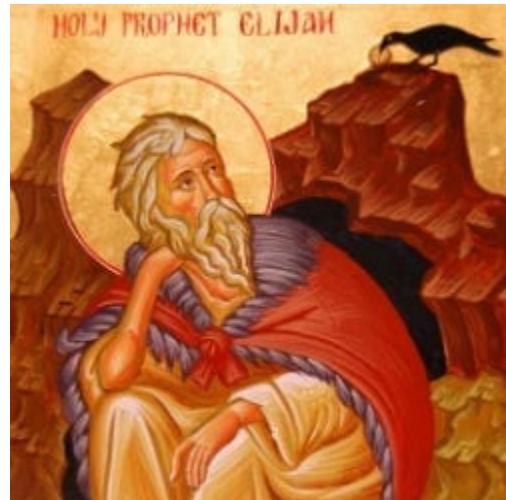
August 9, 2020 — Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 KGS 19:9A, 11-13A; PS 85:9-14; ROM 9:1-5; MT 14:22-23

Stewardship spirituality invites us to surrender control of our lives to God in grateful recognition of the simple truth that all we have is a gift from Him.

While today's readings remind us that God is always in control of His creation and His creatures, the readings also illustrate what amazing things can happen when we fully permit God to take charge of our lives when we embrace the stewardship way of life.

In our First Reading, from the First Book of Kings, Elijah the prophet is instructed to go outside and wait for the Lord. Elijah goes out and a series of spectacular phenomena occur — strong and heavy winds that crush rocks, followed by an earthquake, and then a fire. Yet, the Lord was not found in any of those. Rather, the Almighty was found in a "tiny whispering sound." How unexpected!



We must always remember that our wonderfully-mysterious God sometimes comes into our lives in the most unexpected ways. Do we stay alert and sensitive to His presence to receive the instruction and the countless gifts He is always sending us?

It is all too easy to fail to recognize His presence and gifts in our lives. Taking things for granted — friends, family, material gifts, even God Himself — seems to be part of our human condition.

Paul points this out in our Second Reading, from his letter to the Romans. He laments that some of his fellow Israelites — God's chosen people who have received so many gifts from God, including the law, the promises, and the patriarchs — fail to see the gift of Christ now offered to them.

This happens to us modern-day disciples, too. We have received all the riches of Church teaching and the Scriptures, and the overwhelming treasury of graces in the sacraments, including the gift of Christ Himself in the Eucharist. Our family, our friends, our work, our parish — all these things are gifts from God, as well. When we take our eyes off God, we fail to see that all is a gift from Him, we lose trust in Him, and we do not live out our lives as a grateful response to Him.

In our Gospel passage from Matthew, we learn that Peter makes this very mistake. Just after the multiplication of the loaves and fish, Jesus sends the disciples in a boat ahead of Him to the other side of the shore. Later that evening, Jesus casually strolls up to the boat, walking on the sea. Peter says, "Lord if it is you, command me to come to you on the water," and Jesus responds, "Come." As Peter begins to walk on the water, he momentarily takes his eyes off Jesus to notice the strong wind surrounding them. With that, he sinks.

But what if Peter had not taken his eyes off Christ? What if he had not allowed that moment of doubt, that lack of trust to overcome him? What a grand adventure he could have had out there walking on the sea with Jesus! When we take our eyes off Christ, the many blessings He has given us, and the loving way He treats us, we sink, too.

When we embrace the stewardship way of life and let go of the tight hold over our money, time and talents, our lives become a grand adventure, rooted firmly and gratefully in the God Who always cares for us.

— **Stewardship Reflections by [Catholic Stewardship Consultants](#)**