

Living the Word: 1 Kings 19: 9, 11 – 13

So often we long for a clear sign from God. The prophet Elijah was no exception. As the surviving faithful prophet, he took on the rival prophets of Baal in a competition. Two sacrificial bulls were placed on wood to see whether Baal or God would answer first by igniting a fire. Baal failed to do anything, but God spectacularly lit the fire and then allowed it to rain after a long drought. It could not have been more dramatic, and it ought to have been a triumph for faith in the one true God. But it wasn't! The wicked Queen Jezebel was unmoved and ordered Elijah's death and he fled and hid in a mountain cave. Elijah despaired and God summoned him outside where Elijah experienced wind, earthquake and fire, but without any sense of the presence of God. But when all was quiet Elijah knew the 'still small voice of God'. The times when God chooses to act dramatically are the exception. He prefers to be the constant 'still small voice' which is always there. Like the morning dew which creeps silently up on us, the 'still small voice' may be speaking without us even knowing.

St Cyprian: ineradicable faith

O happy Church of ours, lit up by the honour of God's kindness, now purified by the blood of our glorious martyrs! Once she shone white through the works of the brethren; now she has become purple with the blood of the martyrs. Among her flowers there bloom both white lilies and red roses. Now let each of us strive for the highest of one of these honours. Let each of us be crowned either with the white crown of labours or the purple crown of suffering.



Sunday 9th August 2026
Trinity 10 / 19th Ordinary
Gospel: Matt 14: 22 – 33



St Matthew was a Jewish Christian, which is why his Gospel is immersed in the Old Testament. And any Jewish listener to today's Gospel would have been deeply alert to its strongly Old Testament overtones. Water in the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) is a symbol of chaos and disorder. It is dark and dangerous, the dwelling place of violent forces, the harbinger of death. Think of the creation narrative, Noah's flood, or the waters of the Red Sea consuming and killing the Egyptians. This makes today's Gospel about more than the Lord stilling the storm and walking on the water. Christ is revealing His divine identity and authority. Christ is revealing that He is God. As God brings form to the formless, and order to the chaos, the Lord Jesus in His ministry is ordering God's creation towards its end; and in doing so he is anticipating the great 'stilling of the storm' that His death and resurrection will affect – when he inaugurates a New Creation through his Paschal Victory over Sin and Death.