*PRAYER OF THE DAY Powerful God, Although you can make your presence known in a mighty wind, or an earthquake, or a fire, you often speak to us in the sound of sheer silence. Help us to hear. Amen.*

Hearing a voice say, get-up, eat and drink… A piece of rope walks into a bar and the bartender says, "We don't serve your kind around here." The rope walks out back, ties himself up, and unravels his ends. The rope walks back into the bar. The bartender says, "Aren't you that rope that was just in here a minute ago?" The rope says, "Nope. I'm a frayed knot."

That’s about the only humor to be found in this situation… Elijah is at the end of his rope. There is eating and drinking and serving… and there are many frayed-loose ends. Elijah is burned-out, running for his life, feeling alone against the world… well almost alone. He did pray to God… eventually. In our passage today, Elijah had gotten an irate {text from Queen Jezebel; which we may suppose is worse than a message from King Ahab.} The messenger informed Elijah that the Queen was intent on ending Elijah’s life within the next 24 hours…

How did we get here? Well, the short version is that King Ahab was the worst king in many generations of (1 Kg 16:30) **Ahab** son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him. …

* 1 Kg 16:25 Omri did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did more evil than all who were before him. … and those before him, and
* generations before that Jeroboam (1 Kg 14:9) “done evil above all those who were before you.”

But with Ahab, we are told twice… (1 Kg 18:33) **Ahab** did more to provoke the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than had all the kings of Israel who were before him.

Yet King Ahab had a nickname for Elijah - “Troubler of Israel” (1 Kings 18:17) {really… look for yourself!}At this point in today’s reading

* There has been a drought for 3 years
  + during which time Queen Jezebel {From Sidon in the north by the Mediterranean} has been killing all the prophets of the LORD (1 Kg 18:13)
  + Except the 100 that Obadiah (King Ahab’s trusted advisor and faithful servant of God) hid and fed… and Elijah who the LORD hid and fed with the help of ravens.
* and now Elijah is giving orders to King Ahab. {King Ahab, in Evan Almighty}
  + 1. ‘This is your fault, not mine’ 1 Kg 18:18 because you broke the Lord’s commandments
  + Have all the people of Israel (the kingdom) assemble on Mt. Carmel with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah 1 Kg 18:19
* And they did… Elijah explained a contest to clarify which god they would follow… Elijah - 1 against Baal’s 450, offering sacrifice, the God is in charge of the fire, ‘you first’
  + Spoiler alert – the God of Elijah, the God we follow to this day, was clearly the deity who prevailed by consuming the sacrifice (1 Kg 18:23-39), then all the people reverently declared “The LORD indeed is God!” They believed and Elijah slaughtered his 450 opponents (v 40), and Elijah said to King Ahab, **“get up, eat and drink”** (v 41) and then the LORD ended the drought 3-year-old drought, as the king rode in his chariot about 17 miles to tell his wife her trusted prophets are all dead. (1 Kg 18:45)
  + Ahab did, and so we got to this point, where Jezebel has threatened Elijah’s life.

In the mean-time Elijah went from the river valley, back up Mt. Carmel bowing down to the Lord, (1Kg 18:42) then with the Lord’s help, Elijah outran the chariot **TO** the palace (46) Elijah got the message from Jezebel, then fled for his life, running about 90 miles (on foot) with his servant, then went another day’s journey into the wilderness (19:4).

After all of that!... Elijah prays to God for death. Like Jonah, alone, under the isolated vegetation of a solitary broom tree… Elijah wants to be done, he can’t take any more… or maybe he feels he can’t give any more. And then a messenger does find Elijah, but it is not Jezebel’s messenger with death… it is instead God’s messenger, with life, **get up and eat.**

All Saints day, is a time of remembrance, a time of year when more of the day is in darkness, and grief, mingled with the rigors of daily life can seem overwhelming, or even be overwhelming! People do get emotionally frayed ends, and find themselves at the very end of their rescue rope… like Elijah, some may even be at a point to let go.

And even in that point of desperation, despondency… the LORD is present, with a morsel, “get up and eat” and some reality, otherwise the journey will be too much for you. “Forty days and forty nights” Bible speak for a very long time; did you also notice that Elijah does not have an answer to his prayer? Elijah one of the most miraculous prophets of all time… waited at the end of his rope, a long time. Even when he doubled his journey and went all the way back to the Sinai peninsula, to the Mountain where Moses received the 10 commandments right after the Exodus… he still spent the night in a cave… ~~{specifically in Hebrew “the cave”}~~ THEN the word of the LORD came and listened.

This is the kind of God we follow. One that does miracles and wonder – found in sacrifice consuming fire, and drought-ending down-pours… but not always this momentous, not in rock splitting winds (Think Puerto Rico, Florida, Texas and US Virgin Islands)… not in earthquakes (think Mexico) not in fires (think Northern California)… The God we follow can also be present in sheer silence. When there is nothing else, at the end of a frayed rope, in isolated desperation… and here is food for thought…

Even though Elijah was done, Elijah’s will was to be finished… God’s will was not yet done.

God directed Elijah to return even farther north than the beginning of this journey… through all the lands where his life is in danger… and then to appoint a new King of Elijah’s OWN nation (remember there is already a king that this would depose)… also a king of a neighboring nation, a nation of Aram at war with Israel… and anoint your successor (The LORD did not mention at that point that Elijah would be a mentor for quite a while.)

Elijah’s job will be done… well, this will all take more than 12 years to put into place.

God’s will, will be done… because God is not done yet, Elijah was given-up but God has not… in the face of generations of people straying from following the LORD, there will be a remnant, 7,000 faithful, there will be another prophet. The word of the Lord will keep coming to people on earth.

And life will continue to be difficult, and sometimes untenable, for generations, for thousands of years. Even Jesus in our Gospel reading today, was at the end of a rope - a frayed knot – Jesus asked the rhetorical question, should I say ‘Father save me from this hour?’ … No! This is why I have come, here on the heels of Palm Sunday… again there is a heavenly voice, again there is disbelief among the people, again there is death on the horizon… and we cannot forget… again there will be a rising, and a nourishment. But this time ‘get up and eat’ is spoken for us.

The dying and rising is already accomplished by the LORD Jesus. We eat to remember. We eat to believe, we eat to be nourished for the journey ahead.

Get-up, God is not finished with us yet. Frayed or ‘knot’, we are called to find our successors in the practice of faith… they are out there. We are called to continue, frayed or knot. Like all the generations, all the saints before us who didn’t quit, even when they wanted to, or times seemed impossible. People who sometimes had so much responsibility that instead of one successor they had many. Life may be challenging our will… but look who dies the real heavy-lifting:

Jesus said “and when I am lifted from the earth, I will draw all people to myself.” Jesus has already risen… so rise-up, saints of God… get-up, eat and drink {Gesture to communion table} , otherwise the journey will be too much.

What is the mighty act of God? Presence, hope, calling & recalling, **go out and anoint your successor**… there is one, this witness will go one, the presence of God among the people will go beyond your lifetime (that’s why you need a successor) you do not have to do this forever…

An angel, a messenger… who is/are your angel(s)? messengers of God’s hope and promise?

**After the angel** and the journey, the **word of the Lord** came to Elijah and said The LORD is about to pass by… **present**!

We are… ~~all~~ the saints before us are too…

There is still wilderness… 40 days and 40 nights…

God as we least expect… not powerful wind (talk to someone in Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands), not earthquake (talk to someone in Mexico City), not fire (ask folks in Northern California)… but sheer silence.

Again, a voice came and the Lord said…

Anoint 2 kings (but Aram??? Not Judah) and Elisha as prophet… lots of killing will commence… Elisha will be killing too

1st person?

**Elijah:** *(Come running in and hide at the side of the pulpit shaking…)*

Lord, God… she’s trying to kill me. Are you there?

LORD, God… I’m the only one left… I need you, are you listening?

Almighty One… will you please answer me?

God?? Are you there? I only hear silence, and I’m all alone.

**Narrator**: (*speaking from the pulpit/lectern, pointing to Elijah*)There is Elijah, sitting alone under a solitary broom tree, just like Jonah did… sulking about having to do God’s work in a hostile environment. Feeling entirely alone and powerless, and exhausted. Even the tree he’s sitting under is alone.

Have you ever been there? Feeling like you have been answering the call of God Almighty. Living a life of service, even when proclaiming the divine message brings trouble to you. Feeling like you have fought the good fight and now you are abandoned by the Holy One whose name you are fighting for. Alone. Isolated. Have you ever known anyone like Elijah who is so full of dread, and so devoid of hope, that they just want to die?

That’s where Elijah is.

To be fair, Elijah did just kill 450 pagan priests that served the god Baal for Queen Jezebel… God had not command Elijah to do that. In Elijah’s defense he did not kill the other 400 pagan priests that served ?Aserte (the fertility goddess)?

It’s also informative to note that in this passage Ahab seems like a nice guy, but he was worse than his father the king who was worse than his father the king (add names and worst ever quote)

Interesting that Ahab, the male king, reported to Jezebel the female queen… and it was she who command terror in the heart … it was Jezebel who threatened Elijah’s life and Elijah ran away… then he prayed to God… after he had run. (A reasonable self-preservation response, but running from death, in order to stay alive and then asking to die… hmmm.) And what about the surprise ending of Elijah’s prayer… “I’m no better than my ancestors.”

Sermon notes

Sheer silence including reflection after sermon - mention Enzo and Ref 500 service @ Ignatius

Lament... scared for life God responds ok... go from here far South to extreme north, anoint a foreign king who will overthrow with war& death {pain times NYC truck terrorism)

Then replace yourself, you're not last of prophets, stop whining!

When God speaks ...

Divine absence seems but actually divine presence (mother Theresa reference )

Identify & train your successor (Richard hassler 3 people took over his job; but in family there in no replacement)

Eat communion or journey too much

NPR Bullseye Thurs nov 2 documentary of a writer Joan Dunn?

Amazing passage re death of hubby and daughter 'didn't want year they died to end so loving memory stayed fresh not stale...' get the quite/clip for all saints prayer

Prayer making a difference after rock bottom:

Praying

[Kesha](https://www.google.com/search?q=Kesha&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAONgVuLSz9U3MM0tMc-rBABXkwnwDgAAAA&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjjk4G9m6XXAhWB5SYKHbYhAiQQMQgrMAA)

Well, you almost had me fooled  
Told me that I was nothing without you  
Oh, but after everything you've done  
I can thank you for how strong I have become

'Cause you brought the flames and you put me through hell  
I had to learn how to fight for myself  
And we both know all the truth I could tell  
I'll just say this is "I wish you farewell"

I hope you're somewhere prayin', prayin'  
I hope your soul is changin', changin'  
I hope you find your peace  
Falling on your knees, prayin'

I'm proud of who I am  
No more…

Confirmation Nov 5

I kings 14-15 esp 14

Do what I don't want to do...

Nov. 5, 2017 God Speaks to Elijah 1 Kings 19:1-18 (John 12:27-28) Liturgical color: Green

PRAYER OF THE DAY Powerful God, Although you can make your presence known in a mighty wind, or an earthquake, or a fire, you often speak to us in the sound of sheer silence. Help us to hear. Amen.

Gospel: John 12: 26-28 *or 37*

26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

**27** "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say-- 'Father, save me from this hour'? **No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour.**

**28** Father, glorify your name." Then a **voice came from heaven**, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

29 The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

30 Jesus answered**, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.**

31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out.

32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

33 He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

34 The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"

35 Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going.

36 While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light." After **Jesus** had said this, he departed and hid from them.

37 Although **he had performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in him.**

Children’s message – time for silence, to listen…. Including after the sermon like Reformation service.

**Announcements Prayers**

All Saints Festival Today Donald Duncan Sr.

Jack Frost Parade

Thanks to Fall Fest committee & WBFMC board/volunteers for sandwich sale and bake sale benefitting our Clinic