

Wednesday – Tenth Week in Ordinary Time^{II}

FIRST READING

1 Kings 18:20-39

A reading from the First Book of Kings

Ahab sent to all the children of Israel
and had the prophets assemble on Mount Carmel.

Elijah appealed to all the people and said,
"How long will you straddle the issue?
If the LORD is God, follow him; if Baal, follow him."
The people, however, did not answer him.
So Elijah said to the people,
"I am the only surviving prophet of the LORD,
and there are four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal.
Give us two young bulls. Let them choose one, cut it into pieces, and
place it on the wood, but start no fire.
I shall prepare the other and place it on the wood, but shall start no fire.
You shall call on your gods, and I will call on the LORD.
The God who answers with fire is God."
All the people answered, "Agreed!"

Elijah then said to the prophets of Baal,
"Choose one young bull and prepare it first, for there are more of you.
Call upon your gods, but do not start the fire."
Taking the young bull that was turned over to them, they prepared it
and called on Baal from morning to noon, saying,
"Answer us, Baal!"
But there was no sound, and no one answering.
And they hopped around the altar they had prepared.
When it was noon, Elijah taunted them:
"Call louder, for he is a god and may be meditating,
or may have retired, or may be on a journey.
Perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened."
They called out louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears,
as was their custom, until blood gushed over them.

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Noon passed and they remained in a prophetic state until the time for offering sacrifice.

But there was not a sound; no one answered, and no one was listening.

Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me."

When the people had done so, he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been destroyed.

He took twelve stones, for the number of tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the LORD had said, "Your name shall be Israel."

He built an altar in honour of the LORD with the stones, and made a trench around the altar large enough for two measures of grain. When he had arranged the wood, he cut up the young bull and laid it on the wood.

"Fill four jars with water," he said,

"and pour it over the burnt offering and over the wood."

"Do it again," he said, and they did it again.

"Do it a third time," he said, and they did it a third time.

The water flowed around the altar, and the trench was filled with the water.

At the time for offering sacrifice,

the prophet Elijah came forward and said,

"LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel,

let it be known this day that you are God in Israel

and that I am your servant and have done all these things by your command. Answer me, LORD!

Answer me, that this people may know that you, LORD, are God and that you have brought them back to their senses."

The LORD's fire came down

and consumed the burnt offering, wood, stones, and dust, and it lapped up the water in the trench.

Seeing this, all the people fell prostrate and said,

"The LORD is God! The LORD is God!"

The word of the Lord.

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RESPONSORIAL PSALM

16:1b-2ab, 4, 5ab and 8, 11 (R. 1b)

R. Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge;
I say to the LORD, "My Lord are you." **R.**

They multiply their sorrows
who court other gods.
Blood libations to them I will not pour out,
nor will I take their names upon my lips. **R.**

O LORD, my allotted portion and cup,
you it is who hold fast my lot.
I set the LORD ever before me;
with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed. **R.**

You will show me the path to life,
fullness of joys in your presence,
the delights at your right hand forever. **R.**

ALLELUIA

Psalms 25:4b, 5a

V. Alleluia. **R.** Alleluia.

V. Teach me your paths, my God,
and guide me in your truth.

R. Alleluia. **R.** Alleluia.

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GOSPEL

Matthew 5:17-19

✠. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets.

I have come not to abolish but to fulfil.

Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away,

not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter

will pass from the law,

until all things have taken place.

Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments

and teaches others to do so

will be called least in the Kingdom of heaven.

But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments

will be called greatest in the Kingdom of heaven."

The Gospel of the Lord.