

## Wednesday 19 January 2022

Today is Wednesday the 19 January, in the 2nd week of Ordinary Time.

Silent, surrendered, calm and still. Open to the word of God. In all that is going on around me, all the movement, all the noise, Can I find a moment of calmness and stillness now, Can I feel God's presence here, And surrender myself to it, Opening myself to listen to God's word?

Today's reading is from the First Book of Samuel.

1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51

David said to Saul, 'Let no one's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.' Saul said to David, 'You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are just a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth.' David said, 'The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine.' So Saul said to David, 'Go, and may the Lord be with you!'

Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in his shepherd's bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. The Philistine said to David, 'Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine said to David, 'Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field.' But David said to the Philistine, 'You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hand.'

When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly towards the battle line to meet the Philistine. David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, striking down the Philistine and killing him; there was no sword in David's hand. Then David ran and stood over the Philistine; he grasped his sword, drew it out of its sheath, and killed him; then he cut off his head with it.

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

The story of "David and Goliath" is often recalled in sport, when an "underdog" team is victorious over a more impressive one. What does this story say to you?

Look at the cast of characters: King Saul, "the Philistine" (who is never named), the Philistine's shield-bearer, "David", and "God/The Lord", who is mentioned 8 times. Who is most important in the story?

"There was no sword in David's hand". How do you imagine this moment in your mind's eye? If you were to place yourself in David's place, how would you feel? What would you experience in this moment?

The final line of the story is "when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled..." What does this tell you? How do you imagine this moment?

Now at the end of this time of prayer, see if you can gather your feelings together. Can you express them in a prayer to God?

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

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