

Daily Homily  
Week Eleven in Ordinary Time, Wednesday  
17 June 2020  
[USCCB Daily Reading](#)

Today, we say goodbye to the great prophet, Elijah. He dies, or rather he is taken up into heaven in a dramatic way that only matches his dramatic persona and personality.

However, he does not leave entirely. His footprint will not simply succumb to dust. He has left behind his protégé whom he has mentored to this point in the prophetic life.

“Ask for whatever I may do for you, before I am taken from you.” Elijah says this to Elisha.

What would you ask for? From this powerful, no nonsense, all personality, hugely connected to God individual, what would you ask for? This man has taunted gods and stepped on them. He has stood his ground against hundreds of false prophets, and in the end, he was the only one standing. This man has overturned kings and queens and dished back their own treachery. This man has miraculously multiplied flour and oil and, in turn, saved life. This man has promised the miracle of life to the barren, and his promise was fulfilled. His words are true. His reputation is fierce. His deeds are mighty. His presence, intimidating. What young person could stand with him? Most would simply run. Fearful of the cost. Scared of the demand. Resentful of the sacrifice. Burdened with the responsibility.

Elisha is chosen.

Elisha is chosen and in these last moments of his teacher’s life, proves to be no dumb-dumb. He does not ask for material gain. He does not ask for titles or prestige. He does not even ask to be released from being a student, now that the teacher is gone. He asks for a double portion of Elijah’s spirit. That request goes deep. It is, however, nothing unusual. But it does mark a certain relationship between Elijah and Elisha. The oldest son in the family would be granted the same thing upon the death of his father. He would be given a double portion of his father’s estate. It was custom and practical. The oldest son would become the caretaker of the household and everyone in it. Elisha is naming the relationship for what it is, he is calling Elijah his father. As his oldest son, Elisha is reassuring Elijah that his mission and his household, in his absence, will be sustained. This is not a greed scene – give me twice what you have. This is a scene of relationship and reassurance. In Elijah’s last moments ... two hearts and two lives come together in single bond of family, and the father is given the comforting reassurance that what he has worked for in preserving the house of Israel will not be lost or abandoned. Elisha has taken up the mantle to carry on. He, however, will have his own challenges to face.

As sons and daughters of the Father, brothers and sisters to Christ, and invited into their in-dwelling Spirit of love, what portion of their spirit do you wish to come down upon you? What part of their mission do you sustain and carry on with your life?