

AUGUST 9, 2015



NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



1 KINGS 19:4–8

PSALM 34:2–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9

EPHESIANS 4:30–5:2

JOHN 6:41–51

REFLECTION

Think about the most discouraged you've ever been. Did you just want to give up? Sometimes discouragement is just a bad day and we can try again tomorrow. But sometimes it's more serious. In the First Reading, the prophet Elijah is in such a state of despair that he prays for death. Instead, God sends angels with food to strengthen him. Elijah recovers his strength and his service to God continues. Though we may not see too many angels these days God does send help to us when we are discouraged. Sometimes it's in the form of a friend or family member who knows us well enough to know that we're not OK. It might be a counselor or doctor who sees what's going on and gets us the care we need. Sometimes we are the help that God sends to someone else in need. If you are experiencing depression, having thoughts of death, or feeling like you want to hurt yourself, reach out! There are people all around you who want things to be better for you and can help make that happen!



Suicide is the third leading cause of death for people 15–24 years old. The website *half of Us* is designed for youth and young adults who are struggling with depression, suicidal feelings, or other mental health issues. Watch other people's stories or share your own. www.halfofus.com

ACTION

In 1994, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published a pastoral message to families. This message takes its name from today's reading from Ephesians—*Follow the Way of Love*. One of the things the message said was, "The story of family life is a story about love—shared, nurtured, and sometimes rejected or lost. In every family God is revealed uniquely and personally, for God is love and those who live in love, live in God and God dwells in them (see 1 John 4:16)." Read a little more from the document at old.usccb.org/laity/follow.shtml and take some time today to thank God for the gift (and challenge) of your family.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- Have you ever wanted to give up? What stopped you? What things in your life do you tend to get the most discouraged about? Are there effective ways you have found to help handle those situations or feelings?
- When have you been called to help someone in need? What advice would you give to someone who was feeling suicidal? Which adults in your life do you think would be the most helpful if you or a friend needed them? Was there ever a time when you felt God sent you help when you needed it?