
18 Wednesday

WEDNESDAY, 2nd Week in Ordinary Time

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

Ps 143: 1-2, 9-10

Mark 3: 1 - 6

Some people worry about anger --- about feeling angry when, for instance, they're cheated or abused by someone, or when they hear news of some great wrong or gross injustice done. It's a very human reaction. Sometimes, too, people feel guilty about even getting angry, for some reason, with God Himself. But just getting angry isn't necessarily something bad.

Today's gospel reminds us that Jesus got angry on a number of occasions, perhaps more often than we realize. The "meek and mild" image of Him that we might have learned as small children isn't the adult Jesus of the gospels. In the incident in the synagogue on a Sabbath day, He looked round with anger at the Pharisees present who were trying to find an excuse to accuse Him of breaking the Law, and was grieved at their hardness of heart. No doubt they noticed His flash of anger, His human reaction to their uncaring attitude. But He turned His attention to healing the diseased man.

There isn't anything 'wrong' about that flash of anger we all sometimes experience. It only becomes something wrong, a problem, when we hold on to that first 'automatic' reaction and let it grow and fester in our minds and hearts. It needs to be quickly diffused before it leads to saying or doing things which would indeed be at least lacking in charity, if not actually sinful. Take comfort from the bible's Book of Job, who got really angry with God about what had happened to him; or the story of Jonah whose anger over something silly was met by God's good humour. Don't let the sun go down on your anger.