

## Reflections for Divine Office Readings July 16

First Reading 1Kings 16:29-17:16

This reading shows the importance of following God's commandments with complete trusting obedience. Ahab, the king of Israel shows us an example of disobedience, greed and pride by worshipping Baal and marrying Jezebel. God sends Elijah to rebuke him. Elijah's life is in danger for speaking the truth and so he is sent by God to a remote location. God provides for Elijah's needs by sending ravens to feed him and a stream to give him drink. Then God tells him to go to a foreign land where a widow will take care of him. He goes there only to find that the widow is very impoverished herself. Elijah continues to put his trust in God by assuring the widow that God won't let them go hungry. She takes care of Elijah out of her humble obedience, trust and poverty. God shows his mercy and faithfulness by not allowing the oil jug to run dry or the flour to run out. The story teaches us the value of trusting God with humble faith.

Second Reading

From the beginning of the treatise On the Mysteries by Saint Ambrose, bishop  
Catechesis on the rites preceding baptism

St. Ambrose instructs us how to teach others about the faith before they are baptized. He follows the history of the patriarchs and the maxims of Proverbs for advice. He advises us not to instruct about the sacraments before the initiation of baptism, but to focus more on the thought of choosing God instead of the world. He says that after baptism the instruction on the sacraments will come as a delightful surprise to them since their ears will be opened by the Holy Spirit. He compares the priest to an angel of the Lord almighty whose message is the kingdom of Christ and eternal life. He instructs us not to judge a priest by his outward appearance but listen to what he says as a messenger of God.