

Thoughts on the Daily Word

2nd Week of Year. Friday 23rd January. Readings: 1 Samuel 24:3-21; Psalm: 56; Gospel: Mark 3:13-19.

We tend to think in modern, national terms when we hear of battles and armies in ancient Israel. In reality of course they were bands of what we would have probably called feudal. Most would have been peasants with little military training and some with more professional training, especially when they were charioteers. The immediate groups around Saul and David would be like those disparate groups, some more loyal than others and some more self-serving than others. Later in the story David is revealed as what we would call a 'mafia' style leader organising protection rackets. The band that Jesus is organising is not much different. Poor people with an eye out for what might benefit them. This doesn't mean that there might not be some idealism involved, hence the difference between Peter and Judas. The story in Samuel sounds far-fetched but it was certainly used by David to justify his rebellion and subsequent take-over of the kingdom. It is good for us to know that the Church stems from such a rebellious group, very human and very frail.