

Thoughts on the Daily Word

4th Week of Year. Friday 6th February. Readings: Ecclesiasticus 47:2-13; Psalm: 17; Gospel: Mark 6:14-29.

The power of a meal, or banquet, is presented here in the Gospel. Herod wants to protect John either because he was afraid of him or because he saw something special in him. All of this was overcome in the solidarity of a shared meal with the rich and powerful. This famous story speaks so powerfully to all of us. We all see our weakness when carried away by good food, wine, and company! To say nothing of a dancing girl. This is the power that is touched on in the first reading. In the first reading we have the contrast with David. However, David is no angel, remember Uriah! Power has its risks; it is like dealing with fire. Maybe Herod, like David, got carried away. Power is necessary, we couldn't live without it, it makes things happen in us and around us. We have to make the ultimate choices though. Maybe that is the difference between them. One chose God and the other chose himself. We so often find ourselves with the same, sometimes agonising, choices in our lives. It is easy to condemn the Herod's and Herodias' of the world but there is something of them in all of us. There but for the grace of God...