

Sunday Message

19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year A • 13 August 2023 • Psalter Week 3

'TRULY, YOU ARE THE SON OF GOD'

(MATTHEW 14: 22-33)

After a busy period of preaching and healing and being available for others, Jesus takes a step back from the crowds to pray to God the Father.

It is often said by scripture scholars that the boat in today's Gospel represents the Church and as the boat gets into difficulty, Jesus greets the disciples with the words, 'Courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.' The disciples then need to make a decision to place their trust in Jesus. For in him, they will find peace. The waters of the lake begin to calm and the wind dies down. It is through the power of Jesus and his wonderful signs that the disciples begin to believe. This man is the Son of God. Peter is the person who refuses to wholeheartedly place his trust in Jesus. He thinks he's about to sink into the water despite the reassurances given to him by Jesus. But Peter and all of the Church are invited to reach out to Jesus in the stormy waters of life. We place our trust in him as a guiding and loving presence in our lives. ■

Jesus Calms a Storm on the Sea

DO

Since the gospel scene today is familiar to us, perhaps you can take the time to read the story again. Try to imagine how the disciples felt amidst the stormy waters and dangerous winds. Imagine what it was like when Jesus reached out to calm their fears.

LEARN

'The time would come when Jesus too would feel fear and anguish, when his hour came he was to feel the full burden of humanity's sin upon him Yet in that hour Jesus did not doubt in the power of God the Father or in his closeness.'

(Pope Benedict XVI, Pastoral Visit to San Giovanni Rotondo, June 2009)

SAY

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear.'

(Psalm 46)

REFLECT

I remember talking to a woman a few years ago who only had a couple of months to live. It was one of the more profound moments of my priestly life and as she spoke to me, I think I found myself lost for words. There is very little to say to someone who has come to terms with their impending death. She spoke about her illness and her funeral like a poet would speak about the beauty of a partially clouded sunset sky. Her language was confident and filled with clarity as she explained to me that life had been good to her. God had been present in joyful times and darker times. She was not afraid. I went to her funeral and I wondered if I was ever in the same situation myself, how would I respond? Would I have the strength to place my trust in God amidst my fear and anxiety? I'd like to think so but there's a small part of me that's unsure.

Fear comes in many forms. For a lot of people with jobs, there is that niggling fear that the job may not last. There's the fear of not being able to support a family and make the mortgage repayments. Maybe there is fear of an upcoming result of a hospital scan or fear that a new relationship will not last.

We can be defined by our fears and they can grip tightly to the point where we are paralysed from living life. They prevent us from functioning properly and our motivation to achieve goals and complete simple tasks can abandon us.

There is a worldly wisdom spoken by Jesus today. 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.' It's not just Peter who needs to trust in God's care. We all need to let go of the fears that cripple us. When we place them in God's hands, we can finally let go and live. ■

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Look to your covenant, O Lord,
and forget not the life of your poor ones for
ever.

Arise, O God, and defend your cause,
and forget not the cries of those who seek
you.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

Almighty ever-living God,
whom, taught by the Holy Spirit,
we dare to call our Father,
bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts
the spirit of adoption as your sons and
daughters,
that we may merit to enter into the
inheritance
which you have promised.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING 1 Kings 19:9, 11-13

A reading from the first book of Kings.

When Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain
of God, he went into the cave and spent the
night in it. Then he was told, 'Go out and
stand on the mountain before the Lord.'
Then the Lord himself went by. There came a
mighty wind, so strong it tore the mountains
and shattered the rocks before the Lord.
But the Lord was not in the wind. After the
wind came an earthquake. But the Lord was
not in the earthquake. After the earthquake
came a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire.
And after the fire there came the sound of a
gentle breeze. And when Elijah heard this, he
covered his face with his cloak and went out
and stood at the entrance of the cave.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM Psalm 84:9-14

Response:
Let us see, O Lord, your mercy and give us
your saving help.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace.
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. (R.)
2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. (R.)
3. The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. (R.)

SECOND READING Romans 9:1-5

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Romans.

What I want to say is no pretence; I say it
in union with Christ - it is the truth - my
conscience in union with the Holy Spirit
assures me of it too. What I want to say
is this: my sorrow is so great, my mental
anguish so endless, I would willingly be
condemned and be cut off from Christ if it
could help my brothers of Israel, my own
flesh and blood. They were adopted as sons,
they were given the glory and the covenants;
the Law and the ritual were drawn up for
them, and the promises were made to them.
They are descended from the patriarchs and
from their flesh and blood came Christ who is
above all, God for ever blessed! Amen.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessings on the King who
comes, in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest
heavens! Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 14:22-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat
and go on ahead to the other side while he
would send the crowds away. After sending
the crowds away he went up into the hills by
himself to pray. When evening came, he was
there alone, while the boat, by now far out
on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea,
for there was a headwind. In the fourth watch
of the night, he went towards them, walking
on the lake, and when the disciples saw him
walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It
is a ghost' they said and cried out in fear.
But at once Jesus called out to them saying,
'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was
Peter who answered. 'Lord,' he said, 'if it is
you, tell me to come to you across the water.'
'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of
the boat and started walking towards Jesus
across the water, but as soon as he felt the
force of the wind, he took fright and began to
sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out
his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little
faith, he said 'why did you doubt?' And as
they got into the boat the wind dropped. The
men in the boat bowed down before him and
said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
(all bow during the next three lines)
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Be pleased, O Lord, to accept the offerings of
your Church,
for in your mercy, you have given them to be
offered
and by your power you transform them
into the mystery of our salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord,
who gives you your fill of finest wheat.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May the communion in your Sacrament
that we have consumed, save us, O Lord,
and confirm us in the light of your truth.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.