



Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time - June 20, 2021

- Our Mission: **Share Christ with the World**
- Our Vision: **A Dynamic and Joyful Church where People Experience God's Saving Love**
- We Value: **Coming to Know the Path Toward Salvation**

JB 38:1, 8-11; 2 COR 5:14-17

Gospel of Mark 4:35-41

On that day, as evening drew on, Jesus said to his disciples: "Let us cross to the other side."

Leaving the crowd, they took Jesus with them in the boat just as he was.

And other boats were with him.

A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him and said to him,

"Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Quiet! Be still!" The wind ceased and there was great calm.

Then he asked them, "Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?" They were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"

REFLECTIONS

Jesus had been teaching a large crowd by the Sea of Galilee using parables, as we heard last week in the mustard seed. Afterward, instead of returning to Capernaum, Jesus directed his disciples to sail to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The readings and this account in the Gospel of Mark, going in and out of a dark and stormy night, offers important points for us about faith – appropriate for where we are today, coming through the pandemic, a time of choosing paths to see how we come out on the other side.

SUFFERING: The Book of Job deals with suffering, and the persistent question of why bad things happen to good people. ***Does this ever cross your mind? When/for whom does faith matter?***

Sometimes we get into the belief that because we are close to God as Christians, bad things are less likely to happen to us. The Apostles are hit by a storm sitting right next to him! Theologians say understanding of suffering belongs to God. If suffering is a mystery to us, that is because the authority to command it is not ours.

FAITH SHARING: The love of God was the motivating force behind Paul's strong evangelistic spirit. ***Do you wonder, whether, if we had a much deeper sense of God's love, we too would be much more driven to share the Good News of salvation with others?***

FAITH & TRUST: The disciples wake Jesus up after trying hard to keep their faith during a storm. What is amazing is that after calming the storm, the disciples wonder – who can this be? They seem astonished at his power – if they did not expect him to do just what he did – why did they wake him up? Perhaps they expected him to save the boat – not calm the storm.

When have you believed you were drowning only to find yourself in the arms of safety? What does this teach us about how much faith to have in Jesus? Do we have too little?

COMING OUT OF THE STORM – LIVING OUR VALUES

Pope Francis' address during the extraordinary Urbi et Orbi blessing he delivered while praying for an end of the coronavirus – a homily as the coronavirus storm was raging in full fury:

“ ‘Why are you afraid? Have you no faith’? Faith begins when we realise we are in need of salvation. We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we founder: we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars. Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them. Like the disciples, we will experience that with him on board there will be no shipwreck. Because this is God’s strength: turning to the good everything that happens to us, even the bad things. He brings serenity into our storms, because with God life never dies.”

What have you learned about your faith in the last year? Discuss the pope’s message, broken down line from line below. The pope’s homily was reflecting on this very Gospel of Mark and the crossing of the Sea:

1. *“ ‘Why are you afraid? Have you no faith’? Faith begins when we realize we are in need of salvation. We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we founder: we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars.”* **How do you define faith?**
2. *“Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them.”* **Do you have a hard time bringing your fears to Jesus? Do you let fear overtake you?**
3. *“Like the disciples, we will experience that, with him on board, there will be no shipwreck.”* **When you cling to Jesus, what happens?**
4. *“Because this is God’s strength: turning to the good everything that happens to us, even the bad things.”* **Can you think of a time when “the bad” was turned “to good”? Is there a “resurrection” story to share?**
5. *“He brings serenity into our storms, because with God life never dies.”* **The line “Because with God life never does” – directly ties to our parish value “Coming to Know the Path Toward Salvation”. Can you think of a “storm” in which the knowledge of the gift of eternal life was a comfort?**