

Proper 7

*Sunday between 19 and 25 June inclusive, if after Trinity
Sunday · Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

Principal Service readings

Job 38.1-11 God's first reply to Job: Job's ignorance and God's knowledge
Psalm 107.1-3,23-32 [or 23-32] God rescues the redeemed
2 Corinthians 6.1-13 authentic servants of God
Mark 4.35-41 Jesus sleeps through the storm, then calms it

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
speak to our hearts in the stillness,
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

Gospel Reading

The storm on the lake

³⁵When evening had come, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us go across to the other side.' ³⁶And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. ³⁷A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. ³⁸But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' ³⁹He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. ⁴⁰He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?' ⁴¹And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

Mark 4.35-41 NRSV¹

Comments and Questions

In Mark 4 we find a number of parables about the kingdom of heaven, which conclude with the narrative that is today's gospel reading. The

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kingdom of life and justice is a gift from the Lord. Having faith means welcoming that grace and living by it. However, there is a subtle way of not believing, which is to be afraid.

Lake Galilee has mountains on both sides of it. When a wind sweeps down the valley from the north-west there is no escape, and it can stir up the water violently. This can happen quite suddenly, without warning. Although the disciples were accustomed to such storms, being fishermen, they were also aware how boats could be turned over by the large waves, and the occupants drowned.

Jesus says: 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?' (4.40). The corresponding passage in Matthew has 'little faith' (Matthew 5.26). Mark is more blunt, but it is the same idea in both cases – where there is faith there is no fear.

There are many things that can make us fearful, not just a storm. What makes you inclined to be fearful rather than have faith? One of the challenges of the gospel is to let go of our own securities and to be more trusting that God will look after us. Even the disciples in the boat found that hard, especially as Jesus was sleeping through the storm!

Quotations

1

Pray, and let God worry.

Martin Luther, 1483–1546

2

... it is presumptuous in me to wish to choose my path, because I cannot tell which path is best for me. I must leave it to the Lord, who knows me, to lead me by the path which is best for me, so that in all things his will may be done.

Interior castle / Teresa of Ávila. 1588

3

To be sure, it was not Easter Sunday but Holy Saturday, but, the more I reflect on it, the more this seems to be fitting for the nature of our

human life: we are still awaiting Easter; we are not yet standing in the full light but walking toward it full of trust.”

Milestones: memoirs 1927-1977 / Pope Benedict XVI. 1977

4

Most of the no's that I've received were a blessing from God.

Germany Kent, 1975–

5

It's a funny thing about life, once you begin to take note of the things you are grateful for, you begin to lose sight of the things that you lack.

Germany Kent, 1975–

Related topics

For further study:

Faith; hope; Jesus Christ, fully human, fully divine; paschal mystery; miracles and signs, manifestations; conversion; service/ministry

Closing Prayer

In the beginning, O God,
your word subdued the chaos;
in the fullness of time
you sent Jesus, your Son,
to rebuke the forces of evil
and bring forth a new creation.

By that same power,
transform all our fear
into faith and awe in your saving presence.

We ask this 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.

Opening prayers · Ordinary Time, Week 12²

2 *Opening prayers* : scripture-related collects for the years A, B and C from the sacramentary / International Commission on English in the Liturgy. – Norwich : Canterbury Press, 1999.