

The Second Sunday before Lent

Principal Service readings

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| Genesis 2.4b-9,15-25 | God made man and woman and all creation |
| Psalms 65 | Hymn of praise for God's creation and blessing |
| Revelation 4 | Vision of God's throne, and worship in heaven |
| Luke 8.22-25 | Jesus calms the wind and the waves |

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

Jesus calms the wind and the waves

²²One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side of the lake.' So they put out, ²³and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A gale swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. ²⁴They went to him and woke him up, shouting, 'Master, Master, we are perishing!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵He said to them, 'Where is your faith?' They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?'

Luke 8.22-25 NRSV¹

Comments and Questions

The boat is a symbol often used for the church. The church is tossed in the turbulent sea of life and we easily forget that the one who captains the boat is none other than he who stills the storm.

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The sea is a force no human being has the power to control. It contains hidden depths, dangers, unseen creatures. Everyone is afraid of this perhaps malevolent force, but Jesus remains asleep.

When he is woken up, Jesus is concerned, not about the raging storm, but about the disciples' lack of faith (8.25). He uses the same language to calm the storm as he used to cast out demons – the language of power and authority.

This is an Easter faith, a faith victorious over the powers of evil. The church has been battered down the ages, from without and within. Outside influences are pressures to conform to the world, and persecutions intended to make people cower and give up their faith. From within, there are the influences of heresy and corruption. Can you identify pressures today on the church? Jesus might seem to be asleep in the boat, but we should not lose hearts when the storms seem overwhelming. Jesus is still with us. There is nothing to fear. Jesus can still the storm with a word, a gesture.

Quotations

1

The fishermen know that the sea is dangerous and the storm terrible, but they have never found these dangers sufficient reason for remaining ashore.

Vincent Van Gogh, 1853–1890

2

Faith is not simply a patience that passively suffers until the storm is past. Rather, it is a spirit that bears things - with resignations, yes, but above all, with blazing, serene hope.

Corazon Aquino, 1933–2009

3

In order to realise the worth of the anchor we need to feel the stress of the storm.

Corrie Ten Boom, 1892–1983

Related topics

For further study:

Faith; hope; Jesus Christ, fully human, fully divine; paschal mystery; miracles and signs, manifestation; 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 12, Year B²

CPL • LBC Year C before Lent 2.odt • 2023-03-08

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.