

August 9, 2020

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Kgs 10:9A, 11-13A

Rom 9:1-5

Mt 14:22-33

GROW: Have you ever felt agitated? Sometimes it's about nothing in particular. Other times it can stem from something we said, a regret, a broken relationship, or just an overall sense that something in our life is off-kilter. That feeling comes to mind when I picture Peter walking across that water in the wind toward Jesus. He panicked, even with Jesus in plain sight! That feeling of agitation can throw us off balance, too. Rather than looking down at the choppy water, Jesus encourages us to keep our eyes fixed on him. We may not be able to walk on water (don't try this at home!), but we'll find peace even on the stormiest of days.

GO: "Lord, save me!" I think Peter gets a bad rap for shouting out to Jesus when the waves start crashing about. After all, it took courage for him to "walk on water" in the first place. Likewise, we need to give ourselves credit for taking "leaps of faith" in our lives – whether that means a young person embracing his or her baptismal vocation and choosing to receive the graces and gifts in the sacrament of confirmation, remaining strong in our faith and keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus despite turmoil in the Church, or continuing to pray and seek God's presence on the darkest and most difficult of days. On those more difficult days, we should feel free to shout "Lord, save me!", confident that Jesus will stretch out his hand and uphold us. Likewise, we, too, can be the calming face of Christ to others – extending our hands to comfort, reassure, or just be present with others as they face the storms of life.

ACTION/PRAYER: Have you ever played a sport that required intense focus? Often coaches will encourage athletes to "see" in their mind the successful completion of whatever they are attempting, in order to avoid distractions. When life feels out of whack, we can set our gaze on Jesus through prayer, or perhaps by marveling at nature's beauty. It can also help to remember or keep a journal about moments when we had a palpable experience of God's presence.