

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025**

***The Second Sunday before Lent***

## **Gospel Reading**

**Luke 8.22-25**

### **Jesus Calms a Storm**

22 One day he 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, 23 and 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. 24 They 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. 25 He 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?'

**Other Readings: Genesis 2.4b-9,15-25    Psalm 65    Revelation 4**

## **Homily**

Who then is this? It's a question that the disciples ask at the end of an eventful night on the lake, and it is a question each of us is called to answer. Who do we say Jesus is? The answer we give influences the whole of our lives.

Today's gospel is a familiar story to many of us, it's a favourite for Sunday School and School collective worships. It's full of drama, suspense and a hero who saves the day. Following a busy day of teaching, healing and proclaiming the good news Jesus and his disciples get into a boat to cross the lake. Have you ever wondered that if it was Jesus' suggestion to go across the lake, he knew what was going to happen? After a gruelling day he falls asleep on the boat, the need for rest a reminder of his humanity just as we are about to see his divinity unfold.

Suddenly a storm arises, and the disciples bravely battle the elements. This must have been a tough storm, some of the disciples were experienced fishermen, they knew about storms, but something here filled their hearts with dread and required all their skills. They needed every hand on deck, somewhere in that cry of "Master we are going to drown", was the unspoken plea, "Help us!" There was an assumption that Jesus could intervene and bring rescue. In the simple act of waking him up, there was a trust that Jesus was present and therefore Jesus would do something.

Often in the Bible, the sea is used as a metaphor for life itself and the chaos that may surround us at any point. Our lives can be like a storm. We're sailing along, all is fine, and then something happens which rocks us. It might be an illness, bereavement, debt, job loss, relationship breakdown, so many things can cause us to be unsettled. As our storms rage around us, we too can draw strength from the presence of Jesus. He knows how we feel, our fear, our weariness. Jesus is one with us, the imminent Christ, the one who shared fully in all of humanity's experiences. Jesus is alongside us in the boat, riding with us, sometimes we feel

in control, doing what we know about, happy just to have him with us. Then there are those times when life gets a bit hectic, when the waves get high and the boat fills with water, and we begin to panic. Suddenly we want Jesus to get a bit more involved to feel our panic and pain. So, we rudely shake him awake, “Jesus, help me, help us.”

What happens when Jesus awakes in the boat is odd. He wakes up and does nothing. He doesn't heave too or bail some water, those practical things that a worker should do. Instead, he simply speaks authoritative words. Luke doesn't tell us what they were, but we know that the effect they had on the situation, the wind and waves cease and there was calm. It is his words that help, not his actions. In that moment, Jesus revealed himself as more than just one of them. He is no longer simply Jesus, the real man, sharing in our weakness and experience our pain. Now he is Jesus, fully divine Jesus, with all the power and authority of God. It is God Almighty who created order from the chaos of the deep, and so we meet the transcendent Christ, the God, the Christ who can act with power and transform situations.

“Who is this, that even the wind and waves obey him?” Who else but God?

So, what about us, here in this diocese at the start of 2025. Well just like the disciples we need Jesus in our boat. We love him because He is one with us, yet He commands our response and our respect as He displays the power of God Almighty in our lives. Whenever we come to the end of our own resources and discover that we have to throw ourselves on the mercy of Jesus we make a choice. The choice of faith is absolute. Either we trust Him, or we are left at the mercy of the storm. We can give up or we can persist, trusting that by His very presence something will change. And then we can witness the life changing power of Jesus to bring calm to chaos as He meets us in the storms of life.

### **Conversation Questions**

1. Who do you say Jesus is?
2. What difference does it make to your life to know that Jesus is with you?
3. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you?  
What is it?
4. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

### **Prayer**

Spend some time in prayer, responding to what you have heard today and listening to what God might be saying to you.

### **Collect of the day**

Almighty God,  
you have created the heavens and the earth  
and made us in your own image:  
teach us to discern your hand in all your works  
and your likeness in all your children;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,  
now and for ever.

*(or)*

Almighty God,  
give us reverence for all creation  
and respect for every person,  
that we may mirror your likeness  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

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