

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 43:2)

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection - Jesus is present in all our storms

Storms in our lives have their high purposes. Before Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, He had to prepare the hearts and minds of His disciples so that they firmly believe that He indeed is truly the Son of God and possesses the divine power to change ordinary bread and wine into His own Body and Blood. As a prelude, Jesus multiplied the five loaves and couple of fishes to feed thousands of people. After this, Jesus revealed His divine power to His disciples by walking on the raging waters and controlling the weather elements. After they witnessed Jesus walking on choppy waters and controlling the storm, the disciples professed for the first time their faith in Jesus as Son of God. *Then those who were in the boat worshipped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."* (Matthew 14:33). We are put into the storms of our lives like the disciples so that at the end of it we can be strengthened in our faith as never before. How else can our faith be strengthened if it is not put to the test?

Fear and lack of faith cloud our vision. The disciples could not recognize Jesus when He walked on the waters to them. Though they have been together with Jesus for some time, their faith in Jesus was still not very strong. They have yet to fully believe that He is really the Son of God. Thus, they did not expect to see Jesus because they did not expect Him to be able to walk on water. And so their fear coupled with lack of faith caused them to think that they were seeing a ghost. How many times in our lives have we not been able to perceive the hand of God working in our situations? How many times did we allow our fear to overcome our faith that Jesus is always with us (cf. Matthew 28:20)? How many times did we give in to fear instead of seizing the moment to fully manifest our faith in God to create the condition necessary for Him to work a miracle? *You are the God who performs miracles; You display Your power among the peoples (Psalm 77:14).*

God expects us to exercise our faith in our storms. Faith in God is extremely important for on this foundation, love for and hope in God rest. In the night of the storm, Peter as usual led the rest by faith. He said to Jesus: "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to You on the water." "Come," Jesus said. (cf. Matthew 14:28-29). Humanly speaking, it seems that Jesus is irresponsible to ask Peter to walk towards Him on the water. However, though Peter was a mere man, our divine Lord is there ready to make Peter walk on water if Peter has the requisite faith. The Lord invites us to put all our trust in Him so that He can do the supernatural in our lives. When we put our full faith in the Lord, our problematic situation will be placed on the supernatural plane where the impossible can become possible subject to our faith and God's will.

The Lord is there when our faith fails us. St Peter was able to walk on the water till he took his eyes off the Lord and took in the sight of the raging waters. Our faith fails when we do not keep our focus on the Lord. Though He will ask us: why did you doubt? His hands will reach out to hold us in safety.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, You are the only one who can command the high winds and waves in the storms of my life to calm. Yet You are the one who put me there. Like a mother bird nudging her baby out of the nest, You put me in the eye of the storm to help me learn Your presence in the midst of difficulties and danger. You really desire for me to have a quantum leap in my faith so that You can bring me to the next stage of the plan You have for me. All this while You are transfiguring me, melting my hardened heart, enlightening my darkened mind, loosening my unhealthy attachments to myself, things and other people. You are teaching me to walk the true path, a path You Yourself have walked with bloodied feet to Your self-surrender to God our Father. You stretch out Your hand and say, "Come." Lord, with You at my side, whom should I fear? Mary, My Most Valiant Mother, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.