



Daily Reflections

WHEN THERE IS NO FAITH

By Sr. Katherine "Kit" Gray, CSJ

Introduction

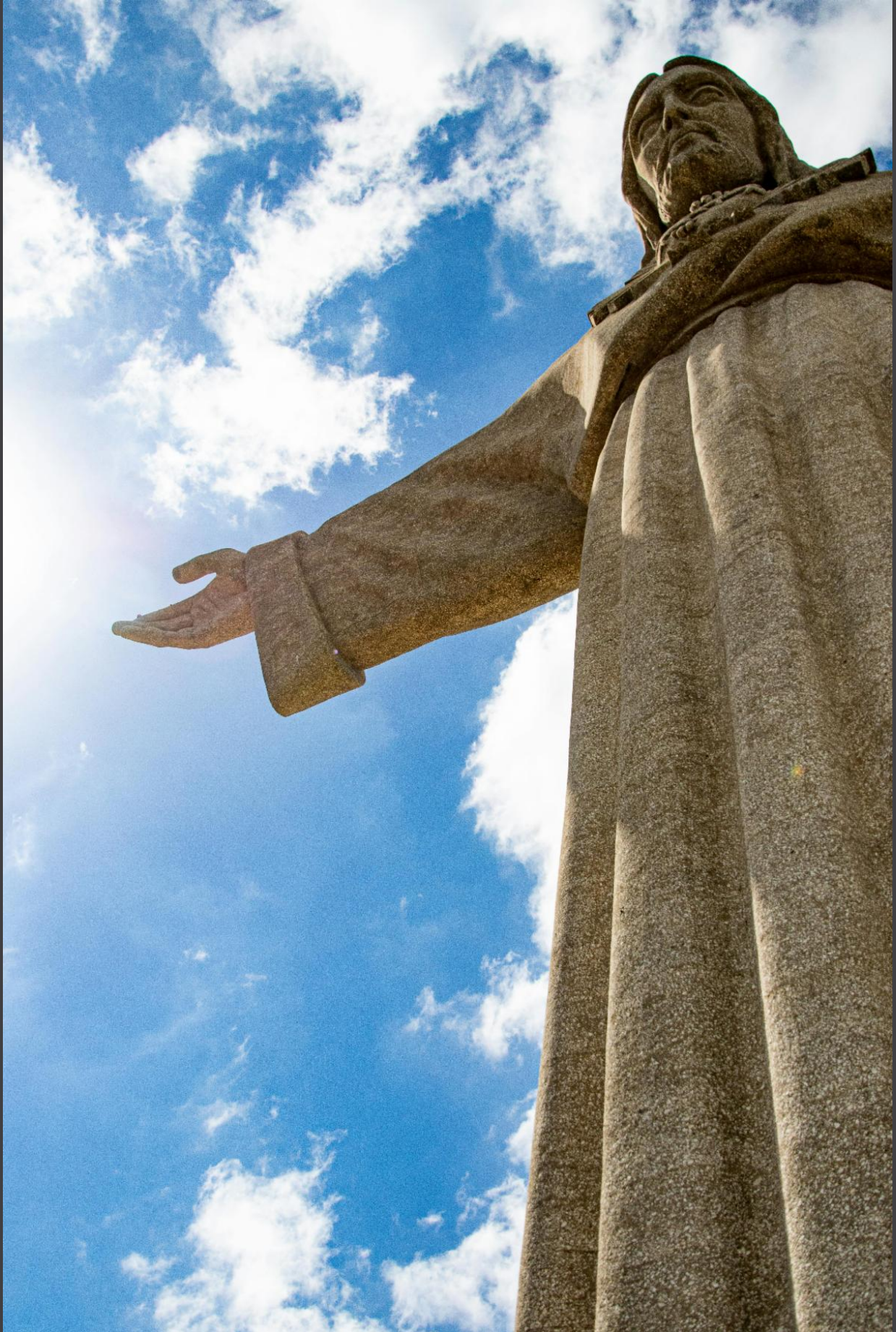
In Mark's Gospel, Jesus moves from one encounter and geographical venue to another very quickly. In chapter 4, he is preaching from a boat, "by the sea"; then he and his disciples are crossing to the other side of the lake when he calms the storm. In chapter 5, immediately after calming the storm, they "came to the other side of the sea, to the territory of Gerasenes" where he cures the Demoniac, he crosses the lake again and cures Jairus' daughter and the woman with the hemorrhages. The event in today's reading follows those cures. Jesus is in his hometown, Nazareth.

From Today's Gospel

Jesus departed from there and came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples. When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands! Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the

brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.” So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

MARK 6:1-6



Statue of Jesus Christ in Lisbon, Portugal
Photo by Magda Ehlers

Reflection

This story continues one of the themes of Jesus' life--his words are not universally understood or accepted; his deeds provoke misunderstanding, judgement, anger, jealousy. Can you hear the people in Nazareth saying, "Who does he think he is?"

In response, Jesus says, "A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house." Fyodor Dostoyevsky says this very dramatically: "Men do not accept their prophets and slay them, but they love their martyrs and worship those whom they have tortured to death."

In context, Jesus may be saying that among your own people you won't get much respect because they knew you before you were famous, they think you are pretentious, or they are envious of your fame.

What is your experience of the truth of this?

No matter what the reason for their negative response to Jesus, their lack of faith kept him from performing "any mighty deeds there."

Reflect on a time when your "lack of faith" got in the way of God's action in your life.

For Prayer

There are only two feelings.

Love and fear.

There are only two languages.

Love and fear.

There are only two activities.

Love and fear.

There are only two motives, two procedures, two frameworks, two results.

Love and fear. Love and fear.

MICHAEL LEUNIG

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