



Daily Reflections

ROCK THE BOAT!

By Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Today's Gospel

After the five thousand had eaten and were satisfied, Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side toward Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. And when he had taken leave of them, he went off to the mountain to pray. When it was evening, the boat was far out on the sea, and he was alone on shore. Then he saw that they were tossed about while rowing, for the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them. But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and cried out. They had all seen him and were terrified. But at once he spoke with them, "Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid!" He got into the boat with them and the wind died down. They were completely astounded. They had not understood the incident of the loaves. On the contrary, their hearts were hardened.

MARK 6:45-52

Reflection

Picking up from yesterday's readings, we find ourselves once again reflecting on God's love and its impact on us. We are charged with "loving one another" and we have the power and gift of the Holy Spirit to guide us as we live a life grounded in love. As the first reading reminds us, God is love and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in us.

In our gospel reading from Mark, we come back into the scene from yesterday's reading about the feeding of the five thousand. After everyone had been fed, Jesus went off to the mountain to pray, leaving the disciples who had launched their boat into the lake. After such an intense engagement of feeding the large crowd, Jesus prayed. It is a reminder to all of us how important prayer is in our lives. Without prayer, we lose our personal relationship with God, which feeds and nourishes us for our life's journey.

After his prayer of solitude, Jesus sees his disciples being tossed about by the wind and waves. We read that Jesus walks on the water as he approaches the disciples, and he calms the winds before getting in with them. I always chuckle when I read "they were astounded" and had not understood the incident of the loaves and fishes. If I picture myself as one among the disciples, I probably would have the same reaction they did. How does one take in the mystery of Jesus at any given moment in time? This passage encourages me to ponder the everyday miracles that happen, and I imagine I too often miss them.

Rock the Boat

O Jesus who calms the winds and seas, may you calm the vessel in which I move and live in this world through the gift of your Holy Spirit.

O Jesus, may I have eyes to see you walking on the waters of my life's journey. May I welcome and recognize your calming presence deep within me.

O Oarsman of my life, may I seek the solitude and nourishment of prayer each day. May I continue to anchor myself in the harbor of your precious love.



Stained Glass - LePuy, France
Photo by Sr. Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- Using the boat as a symbol for your life, who are the disciples who accompany you in your faith journey and how do they support or hinder your ability to stay afloat?
- If Jesus walks “on water” toward you this day, are you ready to receive him? Articulate how this would be for you.

For Prayer

*O Jesus,
may we invite you into our boat this day
as we push out into the waters of life.
Let us remain grounded in you so that
we too can help calm the wind and waves that come our way this day.
Amen.*

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