

Daily Reflections



FEAR NOT!

By Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

Excerpts from Today's Readings

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us. This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his Spirit. ... God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. In this is love brought to perfection among us, that we have confidence on the day of judgment because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love.

1 JOHN 4:11-13, 16-18

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.

MARK 6:45-51

Reflection

Today's readings speak of fear – real or imagined! We all experience fear at different times in our lives, and how we move through this fear speaks to our trust and faith in our Beloved. Jesus speaks directly to the apostles and to us when he says, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid" (Mark 6:50).

Fear can be one of our greatest barriers to living our lives as we desire because it clouds our seeing and experiencing Jesus in the moment. In the first reading from 1 John, we hear the words "perfect love drives out fear." I had to ponder this for a bit because we do experience real fear in our lives. Underneath these words from scripture, I come to understand that it is God's presence that is with us when we are fearful. God's love tells us in no uncertain terms that God is with us, always.

Jesus urges us to "take courage" as evidenced by what he said to the disciples when they were being tossed around by the violent waves of the sea. Sometimes life comes at us in waves that toss us about. These can be waves of discouragement, fear, and a sense of being alone or far from the shores of connectivity and relationship.

It behooves us to remember God is present within and around us. We can and must take courage in God to stay the course! If you are experiencing illness or suffering, pray to Healer God for comfort and compassion. If you are experiencing grief or anxiety, name and claim your grief and anxiety and then gently open yourself to God's tender care and pray for peace and a release from all that binds you.

Never forget that Jesus comes to us in the storms of life and calms the raging waters within us. His love is stronger than anything we are experiencing in our lives. God is ever-faithful, ever-present, and forever loving. It is during times of strife, doubt, fear, illness, or anxiety that we turn to God who loves us deeply. It is for us to choose love over fear and invite Jesus into the chaos of our lives.



Sr. Jayne

Image created by Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- When has fear overtaken your sense of well-being? How did you find your way to summon the courage you needed to work through this fear?
- What are some of your learnings from weathering the storms in your life?

For Prayer

*O God who calms the storms of life,
give us the courage to turn to you when fear threatens our well-being.
As we steady ourselves for the storms of life,
let us be a calming presence for those we encounter on this day.
Amen.*

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