

## 19TH SUNDAY ORDINARY: MT 14: 22-33

When Jesus invited Peter to walk on the water, Peter made a courageous start by stepping out of the boat and beginning to walk toward Jesus. But when Peter saw the wind and the storm, he became afraid and shifted his attention to the wind and storm instead of continuing to trust in Jesus. As Peter started to sink he cried out, "Lord save me." Immediately, Jesus reached out His hand and caught him.

Every time Peter fell, he rose again. His failures only made him love Jesus more deeply and trust Jesus more strongly. Jesus keeps watch over us at all times - especially in our moments of challenge and difficulty. Let us ask ourselves: "Do we really trust in Jesus for His strength and help?" Jesus promises us, we have no need of fear if we trust in Him and in His great love for us. Sometimes, we may feel that we are far away from God. Even in those moments, God is always with us with His protective hands. Like Peter, we fear that we will sink under the storms and waves of life. Like Peter, we too are focusing on material things, worldly pleasures, and selfish lives, instead of Jesus. When we focus on Jesus and give more priority to Him, we begin to experience that His hand is always extended in the difficulties and the struggles of our lives, including our present crises.

Do we recognize Jesus 'presence when we face difficulties and troubles and are we trying to cling to Jesus as Peter did in his trial? Jesus is always ready to strengthen our faith, to assure our hope in His promises, and to fill us with His peace and love. Let us experience Jesus 'presence in every moment of our lives.

You might have heard the story about the Eagle in the Storm: The eagle knows when a storm is approaching long before it starts. The eagle will fly to some high spot and wait for the winds to come. When the storm starts, the eagle sets its wings so that the wind will pick the eagle up and lift it high above the storm. While the storm continues, the eagle is flying high above the clouds peacefully. The eagle does not escape from the storm, but the eagle simply uses the storm to lift it higher. What an extraordinary way to deal with challenges and difficulties!

There is a wonderful lesson we can learn from the way an eagle approaches a storm. When the storms of life come upon us, we too can rise above them. We can lift ourselves above challenges and hardships by setting our minds and our hearts on God. The storms do not have to overcome us. We can allow God to lift us above them. God helps us to overcome the storms of sickness, pain, tragedy, failure, and disappointment in our lives, and make something good come from our

present challenges and crises. We can fly above the storms! We should remember that it is not the burdens of life, which weigh us down, but it is how we handle them. Let us accept our daily challenges so that we can experience the joy of victory!

Jesus promises that in every storm we face, the storms of doubt, tension, and uncertainty, the storms of anxieties and worries, and the storms of temptation, God's saving hand is extended to us and gives us hope and peace. Today, we are challenged to reach out our own hands to people, who need our support and help, as Jesus did. Let us trust in God, who can calm all the storms in our lives! Let us stay focused on Jesus and keep our eyes on Jesus and walk with Jesus. Let us get out of our boats – our comfort zones and have courage and faith in Jesus. Be not afraid!