

Take heart; it is I. Do not be Afraid.

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Ninth Sunday after Pentecost) is Mark 6:45-56. This reading has two narratives. The first is about Jesus walking on water and the second has Jesus healing the sick in Gennesaret.

This reading follows the feeding of the 5000. There was an excitement that was bordering on getting out of control. The people wanted to take Jesus by force and make him the “bread king.” Jesus wanted to get the disciples out of this setting and sent them across the Sea.

Jesus, like at other hectic times, takes time to communicate with his Father. This is a great example for us when times seem to be confusing and frenzied.

The disciples, meanwhile, were in the middle of a storm on the Sea of Galilee. It was not unusual for storms to pop up out of nowhere on this body of water. They were struggling to make headway. Jesus though deep in prayer was aware of their situation. He left them struggle for some time in order to show them, as He so often shows us, that He is able to help in the hour of need.

And along comes Jesus walking on water. Obviously they were scared out of their wits. In the midst of this chaos comes Jesus with his words of “*Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.*” The disciples were confused because their faith was still in flux. But Jesus did not give up on them. Isaiah 42:3 says of Jesus the Suffering Servant: “*a bruised reed he will not break.*” It is good news, then, that Jesus remains devoted to us even when our commitment wavers or fails. Instead he will touch us with his loving comfort.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for being ever mindful of all our needs. Thank you for never giving up on us even we are frantic with fear. Help us use your Word and Sacraments to strengthen our faith. Amen