

## Wellspring, Fransalian Center for Spirituality

August 9, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today, we celebrate the nineteenth Sunday in ordinary time of the year. The Gospel of this Sunday is a continuation of the Gospel of last Sunday, the story of Jesus feeding the crowd. After feeding the multitude, Jesus sent the disciples away. The reason for this was that they were going to force Jesus to be their king and Jesus did not want the disciples to get caught up in this movement. Then Jesus went up the mountain to pray.

Today's Gospel reading (Matthew 14:22-33) tells us that on the way, the disciples got caught in a severe storm and Jesus came toward them, walking on the troubled waters. The frightened disciples did not recognize him. In the hour of the disciples' need, Jesus came to them. When the wind was contrary and life was a struggle, Jesus was there to help and to save.

In life, the wind is often contrary. There are times when we are up against it and life is a desperate struggle with ourselves, with our circumstances, with our temptations, with our decisions and other such slings and arrows. At such times, we do not need to struggle alone. Jesus comes to us across the storms of life, with hands stretched out to save and calls us to have courage and assures us, "It is I, do not be afraid." When the wind is contrary and we are in danger of being overwhelmed by the storms of life, listen to the voice of Jesus, "Come! It is I, do not be afraid." At the bidding of his master, Jesus, Peter began to walk toward him on the troubled waters. Peter looked at the wind, saw how strong it was, and began to sink. He was doing well when his eyes were on his master and began to go down when he began to look at the wind. Jesus pulled Peter up and got into the boat with him. With Jesus in the boat, the storm passed, the sea became calm and they found peace.

St. Francis de Sales speaks about a custom in the country district in which he lived. He had often noticed a servant girl going to draw water at the well. He also noticed her putting a piece of wood into the brimming pail. One day, Francis de Sales asked the girl why she put the piece of wood into the pail. She replied, To keep the water from spilling...to keep it steady." Writing to a friend later, Francis de Sales told the story and added, "When your heart is distressed and agitated, put the cross into its center to keep it steady." In times of storm and stress, the presence of Jesus and the love that flows from the cross bring peace and serenity.

During the coming week, take a few moments each day to meditate on the compassion and generosity of our God. Reflect also on how you may become more generous and compassionate in your relationship those around you.

God bless you and your family.

Fr. Gus

**Nineteenth Sunday In Ordinary Time**  
**August 9, 2020**

**Penitential Act**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Let us acknowledge our sins and pray for forgiveness and peace.

A moment of silence for remembering your sinfulness

**Pray the formula of general confession:**

I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned,  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,  
through my fault, through my fault,  
through my most grievous fault.  
therefore, I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Lord have Mercy      Christ have Mercy      Lord have Mercy

**Collect**

Almighty ever-living God,  
whom, taught by the Holy Spirit,  
we dare to call our Father,  
bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts  
the spirit of adoption as your sons and daughters,  
that we may merit to enter into the inheritance  
which you have promised.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

**Liturgy of the Word**

Prayerfully read the first reading and then read my reflections below and spend a few moments of personal reflection. Do the same with Responsorial Psalm and other readings.

**First Reading: 1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13**

Elijah became desperate, disturbed by the evil designs of Jezebel and the weakness of Ahab, king of Israel. Threatened by Jezebel, he fled to the desert and prayed for death and said to the Lord, "this is enough...take my life...I am no better than my fathers". He came to a point where he saw no direction and no escape from his struggles. He cried his pains and frustrations and hunger and was fed by God. He became strong in his trust and continued his journey and persevered in his efforts to fulfill his prophetic mission.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Elijah came to a cave on Horeb and took shelter. This excerpt tells us that the Lord asked him to go outside and stand on the mountain and wait for him. Elijah was used to the visits of the Lord in extraordinary events of nature. He looked for God in the strong wind, earthquake and fire and failed to find God. Finally, he found God and heard his voice in a gentle whispering sound.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Elijah had to learn to listen to the gentle voice from inside and trust that voice. Learn to listen to your heart.**

**The Lord's voice comes to us through many unexpected and surprising events and experiences. Wait for the Lord...wait with courage...listen to his voice**

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 85**

The long journey home from Babylon to Zion was an important part of Israel's history. God had forgiven them and brought them back home. The Psalmist says, God has not just brought them home from exile, but has now rehabilitated them. He tells them that they are listening to wrong voices and calls them to listen to the voice of God. God speaks peace to His people, not anger or hatred. God's *hesed* and *emet*, His love and faithfulness have embraced. His love and fidelity have become one...they have fused into one. He cannot but love.

**Dwell on the thoughts and prayer of the Psalmist for a few moments.**

Discovering the unfailing, steadfast nature of Covenant love gave the returnees of exile the confidence they needed. They could now sing and shout: Faithfulness will spring from the ground...the Lord will give what is good...earth will yield”.

**Dwell on the thoughts and prayer of the Psalmist for a few moments.**

**I will hear what God proclaims;  
The Lord – for he proclaims peace.  
Near indeed is his salvation for those who fear him,  
Glory dwelling in our land.**

**Pray the whole Psalm now – if not now, pray it later when you have a little more time**

### **Second Reading: Romans 9:1-5**

Paul makes bold claims that he spoke the truth about Jesus as the Messiah and invited all to accept Jesus as their savior and Lord. The fact that many did not recognize Jesus as their savior was for Paul a constant grief and pain in his heart for the Christian community. He affirmed that he was willing to die for them; that he would even be parted from Christ if it would help them. He loved his community and was willing to sacrifice himself for them.

**Be generous and be prepared to make the necessary sacrifices in fulfillment of God’s plan and purpose for you.**

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

### **Gospel: Mathew 14:22-33**

After feeding five thousand with five loaves and a couple of fish, Jesus withdrew to the mountain alone for prayer. He sent the disciples ahead of him to the other side of the lake and they had to face strong headwinds. Jesus came to them on the troubled waters.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**The Lord reaches out to us when we are in troubled waters and are facing strong headwinds. Be confident...stand strong....hold your heads high!**

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

The disciples were so frightened that they did not recognize the Lord reaching out to them. Fear has a way of blinding our eyes while simple faith opens our eyes.

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Peter saw his master and wanted to walk across to him over the troubled waters and he did, at the word of his master. Then Peter lost his focus, saw how headstrong the wind was, became frightened, lost his strength, and began to sink into the deep water!

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Even as he began to sink, Peter cried out, "Lord, save me". And the Lord heard his cry and pulled him to a safe place. With Jesus in the boat, they found new strength and courage. In Jesus there is hope for the hopeless!

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

Faith gives us a new vision...a vision of strength, of the presence of something and of someone far greater than ourselves in whom we can put our trust and face what must be faced..... Stay focused! Keep your eyes on the Lord and his strength!

**Dwell on this thought for a few moments before reading further.**

**Intercessions: Take a few moments to pray from your heart.....**

Remember our Holy Father Pope Francis, Bishop Joseph Strickland and all our spiritual leaders.

Remember our president and all leaders our country and the world and pray that God will enlighten them with His wisdom to make wise decisions during these difficult days.

Remember your most urgent need and that of your family and those in your care.

Remember those who are affected by COVID-19 and those who care for them.

Remember those who are searching for a cure for COVID-19.

Remember all who suffer and all who have no one to care for them.

Our Father...

**Gracious God, who renews your Church in every age, may we live each day in the light and life of Easter until we come into their fullness with your risen Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, our Master and our Savior. Amen**

**Spiritual Communion**

Lord Jesus, I believe in your real presence in the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar. I place myself in your presence and adore you, worship you and glorify you. I am unable to receive you in Holy Communion at Mass today. I hunger and thirst for your way, your

truth and your life. Come into my heart Lord and satisfy my hunger and quench my thirst.  
Bless me that I may give witness to your presence in my life. Amen

**Be Still: Spend a few moments in silent prayer**

**Prayer after Communion:**

May the communion in your Sacrament  
that we have consumed, save us, O Lord,  
and confirm us in the light of your truth.  
Through Christ our Lord.

May the Lord bless us, keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

Let us praise the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Saint of the Day, August 9 – St. Edith Stein and 20 other saints are remembered  
this day.**

Fr. Gus Tharappel, msfs

**Faith is like a bright ray of sun light.  
It enables us to see God in all things as well as all things in God.  
(St. Francis De Sales)**