

Sunday, August 9, 2026 – Nineteenth Sunday of Easter Year A

First Reading - 1 Kings 19:9.11-13

A reading from the first book of the Kings

Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord God.

When Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain of God, he went into the cave and spent the night in it. Then he was told, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord.' Then the Lord himself went by. There came a mighty wind, so strong it tore the mountains and shattered the rocks before the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there came the sound of a gentle breeze. And when Elijah heard this, he covered his face with his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

Responsorial Psalm - Ps 84:9-14. R. v.8

(R.) Lord, show us your mercy and love,

and grant us your salvation.

Second Reading - Romans 9:1-5

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

I would willingly be condemned if it could help my people.

What I want to say is no pretence; I say it in union with Christ – it is the truth – my conscience in union with the Holy Spirit assures me of it too. What I want to say is this: my sorrow is so great, my mental anguish so endless, I would willingly be condemned and be cut off from Christ if it could help my brothers of Israel, my own flesh and blood. They were adopted as sons, they were given the glory and the covenants; the Law and the ritual were drawn up for them, and the promises were made to them. They are descended from the patriarchs and from their flesh and blood came Christ who is above all, God for ever blessed! Amen.

Gospel Acclamation - Psalm 129:5

Alleluia, alleluia!

I hope in the Lord,

I trust in his word.

Alleluia!

Gospel - Matthew 14:22-33

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Command me to come to you over the water.

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy

sea, for there was a head-wind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered. 'Lord,' he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

Why did you Doubt?

Reflection on the Gospel-19th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

(Matthew 14:22-33)

Veronica Lawson RSM

Our beautiful planet is presently battered by waves of life-threatening weather events: the summer heat in Europe has already taken many lives and it seems that there is little prospect of change in direction without drastic human intervention. Our church is likewise "battered by the waves". Over its two millennia history, countless church members have died for their faith, while others have been and are being denied the freedom to practice their religion. In recent decades, it has been "battered" by terrifying waves of its own creating. Only God can bring order out of the chaos and God works through the courageous witness and action of faith-filled disciples.

In today's gospel, Matthew writes of Jesus astride the waves like the God of Israel in the Book of Job (9:8). In Israel's mythology, the sea represents chaos. To walk on water is to have power and authority to bring order out of the chaos. Matthew presents Jesus as exercising the power of God over the potentially destructive chaos. Jesus makes his claim to divine power explicit in words that echo God's words from the burning bush: "It is I" (literally "I am"). He tells the frightened disciples to take heart and not to be afraid. Peter, leader of the group, continues to doubt. He asks for a sign and is then prepared to take a risk in order to come to Jesus on the water. He begins to falter when he takes his eyes off Jesus and focuses instead on the threatening wind. Jesus reaches out his hand to rescue Peter. In a lovely gesture, Jesus takes him by the hand and holds him firmly in his grip. Jesus names Peter's hesitation as a response of limited faith.

Matthew weaves the story of Peter into an earlier story from Mark's gospel. We can only speculate on the reasons for this. Were Matthew's communities going through hard times? Were they battered by the waves of conflicting loyalties as they found themselves excluded from Pharisaic Judaism? Was the pressure of separation from the synagogue too great for some, even for those in leadership? This is a telling story for anyone who exercises leadership at any level in the church. It is a reminder to us to keep our eyes firmly fixed on the source of hope in times of struggle and uncertainty and on the crucial issues that face our planetary home.

Finally, this story invites us to consider the threatening waves created by the violence of war, by cold and heat, by fire and flood, and by food insecurity. The members of the human community, which is largely responsible for the climate crisis, must join hands to save what can be saved. The growing commitment to renewable energy provides a contemporary image of a saving hand reaching out to Earth communities that are in danger of being submerged by flood, overwhelmed by hunger and violence or destroyed by scorching heat.