

## Homily – 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A) – 13 August 2017

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When we listen to Scripture or read Scripture it's important to understand that the people we call the Sacred Authors belong to a community and the Community of Matthew was a mixture of Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians and the Gospels were written in a response to various situations that the early communities experienced.

The one thing we have to understand is that the Gospels are not biographies of the Life of Jesus, it's not like taking down a book from a shelf and reading about the life of some person it's how the faith community experience Jesus.

So in Matthew's Community there was a time when they experienced great tribulation, great trials and so this story of Jesus walking on the water coming to the Disciples across a storm tossed sea is symbolic of Jesus responding to the needs of a community that were experiencing great hardship, great difficulty. In our own lives we still experience that, there are times when we feel overwhelmed, we feel swamped, we feel that we're sinking and we don't know what to do and it's in that moment that Jesus comes to us, walking to us through the storm, walking towards us across the storm tossed sea. Jesus reaches out and holds us up when we feel that we are sinking, when we feel that things have just become too much, when we're overpowered, overwhelmed, he's there.

When St. John Paul the Second came to Australia in 1986 he spoke to the Priests in St. Patrick's Cathedral and he made a statement, it's a very profound statement, he said '**When we are weak Christ is strong**' so in our weakness we need only reach out and feel the strength of the Lord and be lifted up by the '**strength of the Lord**'.

Peter trusted in Jesus as he stepped out of the boat but then the cares and the worries of the world frightened him and he lost sight of Jesus and that's why he began to sink but his plea to Jesus '**Lord save me**' did not go unanswered. So our plea to Jesus will not go unanswered, the Lord will respond to our cry, the Lord will not let us carry any burden that is too heavy he will take it from us and when he believes that we're ready he'll give it back to us.

The Lord is there for us, Jesus told us '**I will not leave you orphaned I will be with you until the end of time**'. So when we doubt it's because of our own weakness, it's because of our own insecurity, it's because of our own fear and that's the time when we need to say '**Lord help me, Lord save me**' and that little prayer will sustain us, that little prayer will lift us, that little prayer will make us feel comfortable and more secure. Faith is a gift, a gift that God gives us, a gift that we are free to accept or reject, so we are the ones who doubt, we are

the ones who fail, Jesus is always there, his love is steadfast, his presence is our security.  
We need only reach out to him, we need only ask him and he will respond.

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