

Lenten Devotional March 1, 2024

Scripture

Mark 4:35-41

35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." 36 And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. 37 A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. 38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" 39 He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. 40 He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" 41 And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Devotion

The Rev. Connie B. Hoeke '94

"Are we there yet?" It is a standard question for children (and often adults) when traveling to a destination. It is a question of frustration and wonder about whether there will be an end to travel. In this passage, the disciples and Jesus are traveling in a boat when a terrible storm rages against them. The boat was swamped with water and the disciples, including several professional fishermen, were afraid. Because Jesus does nothing about the storm, the disciples think that he doesn't care about their plight. However, Jesus does care. He cares so much that he addresses the storm as he would a demon; he quiets the storm and there is a perfect calm that results.

The main point of this passage is trust and faith. And Jesus asks the disciples why they are afraid. It is as if he is asking them, "Aren't you there yet? Don't you believe?" In Mark, faith is shown by believing in Jesus as Christ and as the Son of God. A miracle worker could have done other miracles, but only God can rule the winds and the storms. Jesus has just told people many parables and has also explained them privately to the disciples and yet they do not understand who Jesus is, i.e. the Son of God. We must believe that God is always with us and is stronger than evil. We also need to go to Jesus with our requests with faith that he will answer our needs and fears. Later, in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus asks them to pray for him, it is the disciples who are indifferent to Jesus' difficult moment when he asks God to remove the cup of death facing him. Faith and trust in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is imperative if we are to follow him and be his disciples. Let us always believe in Jesus the Christ and obey him.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for being so faithful to us even when we don't trust you with our fears and desires. As we look toward the cross, we realize the evil you bore on our behalf. You also overcome the evil in our lives and help us to trust you with every part of our lives. May we trust you with our requests and know that you will answer us as our faithful God who accompanies us on our journey. Help us to pray. Amen.