

Lent Devotional March 13, 2026

Scripture

Mark 6:47-56

47 When evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. 48 When he saw that they were straining at the oars against an adverse wind, he came toward them early in the morning, walking on the sea. He intended to pass them by. 49 But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and cried out, 50 for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." 51 Then he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, 52 for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

53 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. 54 When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him 55 and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. 56 And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

Devotion

The Rev. Dr. Carole Reidmeyer Martin '20

Who is Jesus? How would we react if we saw him show up in the flesh? Would we analyze him? Maybe we'd check for inconsistencies in what he says and what he does. Perhaps we'd scrutinize his motives—is he ambitious or a nobody who's attracting attention?

The disciples, the ones who had been traveling with Jesus for some time now, had seen and heard much that they didn't yet understand. Jesus fed the crowds from a meager lunch. He healed with his words and his touch. The disciples themselves had been commissioned to spread the good news and had themselves cast out demons. But they just saw Jesus walk on water, stilling the storm. And we are told that their hearts were hardened, unreceptive to what they had seen with their own eyes. Who is this Jesus? He seemed, well, they weren't sure exactly who he was.

The crowds on the other side of the lake had seen and heard much as well. They were drawn to Jesus. Jesus' words about the inbreaking of God's kingdom gave them hope. Moreover, they didn't just share what they knew about Jesus; they literally carried the sick to wherever Jesus was so that they might touch the fringe of his cloak and be healed. Who is this Jesus? A healer who gave them hope, who accepted them as they were.

In the end, Jesus' disciples, minus one, carried on Jesus' kingdom mission. Many in the crowds became followers of the Way. For over 2000 years since, Jesus has kept showing up in the lives of his followers. Each one of us must decide how to respond to his invitation. May we openly embrace the invitation to receive Jesus, the One who lived, died, and rose again.

Prayer

Compassionate God, draw us near to You in this Lenten season, that we may be closer to You and walk ever faithfully, trusting in Your grace and mercy. Amen.