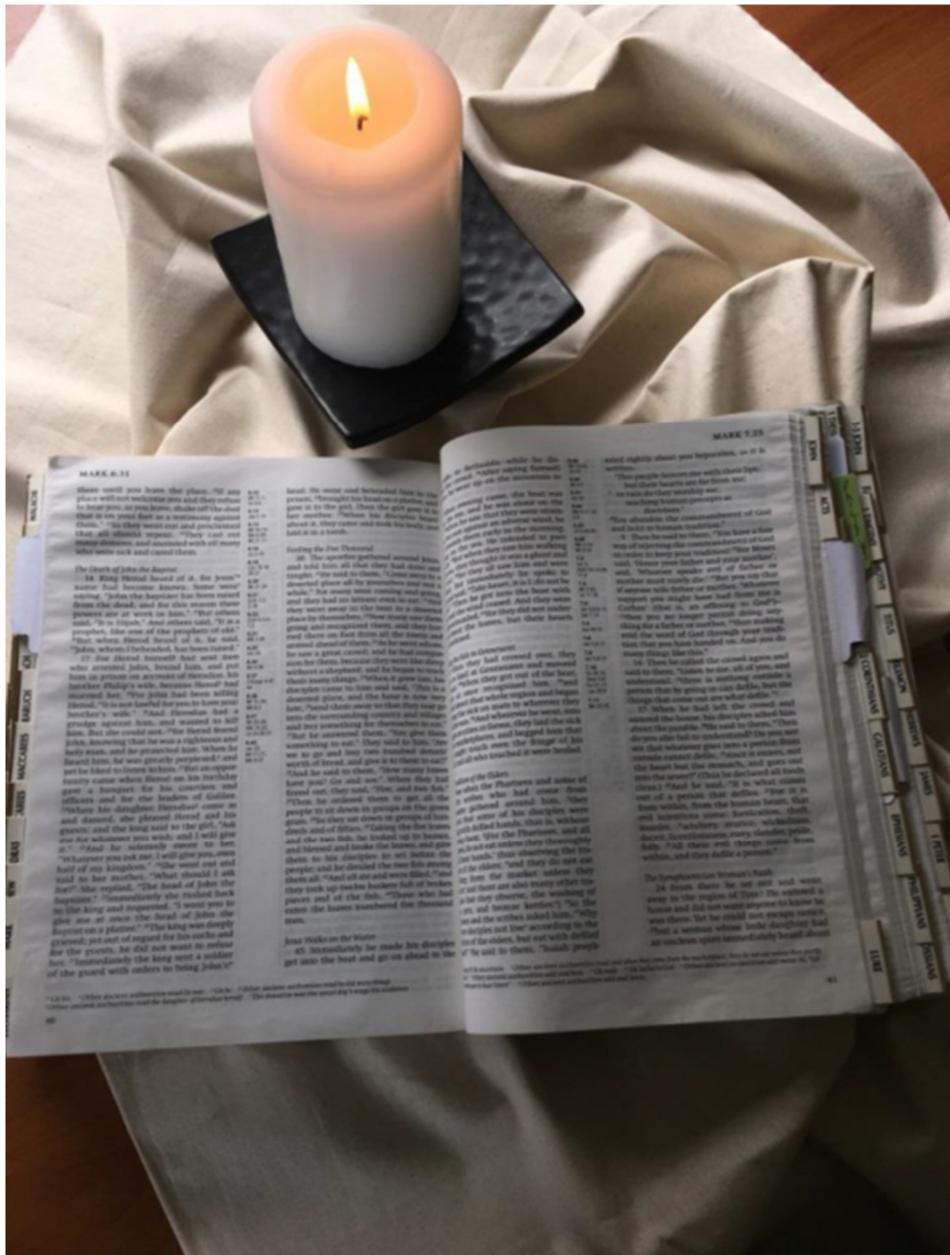


Reflecting on the Gospel with Children

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



*Gather together, light your candle and make the sign of the Cross
Read the Gospel, reflect quietly, thinking about what it says to you
Reflect on the questions then finish with the prayers*

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

In today's Gospel, Jesus trusts Peter's ability to walk to him on the water; otherwise he would not have called Peter to do so. It is Peter who doubts himself. In this moment of realising he can't do it alone, he calls out to Jesus. One of the enduring images of Jesus is as the one who saves – the Saviour. When the realisation eventually comes to each of us that we can't do it all alone, we need only call on the one who saves.

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty ever-living God,
whom, taught by the Holy Spirit,
we call our Father,
bring, we pray, goodness and perfection to our hearts,
that we may learn to better trust ourselves and also you,
Through Jesus Christ, your Son,
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
I hope in the Lord,
I trust in his word.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
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. 'You of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. Those in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Focus

The scriptures today remind us of a wonderful truth: God is always present to us and looks for ways in our everyday lives to draw our attention to this loving presence.

Jesus' disciples are good examples of this. Jesus shows us how we can grow in awareness of God's presence: 'When he had sent them away, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray.'

For Parents

Very often we think of God when something frightening or tragic is happening, or when we are in the midst of a great sorrow. Talk with the children about God's desire to be present to us at all times. God is always with us, but we have to become aware of God. We see times of prayer and mindfulness are necessary to help us grow in this awareness. Encourage your children to think of God during the day, to thank or praise him. Sharing prayers at meals and bedtime are also good habits to develop.

CHILDREN'S DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Where were Jesus and his friends and what did they do when they saw Jesus walking on water? What did Jesus say to them?
- Peter doubted Jesus. Can you remember a time you didn't believe you could do something or when you thought your family would not be able help you with something?
- Jesus comes to help us when we find things hard. He told Peter to be strong.
- Suggest some of the things for which we might ask Jesus' help?
- We pray we might believe in Jesus, even in the hard times, when we feel life is unfair or feel frustrated.

LET US PRAY

Leader: Let us pray to God who cares about all of our needs.

Reader: We pray the Church will always remain faithful to God and to God's people.
Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray nations will work together to develop, share and provide, health care for all and research for a Coronavirus vaccine. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray those who have troubles in their lives during this difficult time of lockdown and distance learning, will find comfort in knowing that Jesus is always beside them. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray those whom we love but cannot presently be with, will know they are loved and missed. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: We pray those who have died will be gathered into God's arms including Brigitte Johnson. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: All-powerful God, accept our prayers and walk beside us through every storm until we come to rest in you. We ask this in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

At a time when we feel a bit afraid and uncertain, when all families are stressed — in Melbourne and beyond. As we were reminded last week, Jesus is with us, he doesn't turn away. God gives us all we need.

We pray, we will trust in God even when life seems like deep water. Jesus reminds us to have courage.

May the Lord bless us and keep us,

All: Amen

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