

## Homily for 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the Ordinary Time, Year A

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Jesus came during the fourth watch of the night. What is so special about this **fourth watch**? The Roman soldiers were using this term in order to signify the most dark hours during their vigil: time from midnight until 3 o'clock in the morning. *We see Christ choosing to come over to his disciples during this most dark hour and to calm down the stormy of the sea.* He chose to come to them over a stormy sea – that represents the image of the World - showing to us that we'll also be able to walk over the waters unharmed by the powers of the world if we exercise and place our faith in Him. In that moment Jesus put his disciples to the test, he challenges them so that they may grow in their faith.

Christ's power over the elements is shown. He walks on the water and calm down storm: it was a miracle in the eyes of the disciples, but not for Jesus, because He is the Creator of the World. St. Peter's attempt to walk over the water is successful so long as he exercises faith on Christ. It's only when St. Peter exercises faith in Jesus that he is able to walk over the stormy sea. As soon as he gets afraid of the storm and stops holding on to his faith in Jesus, he starts experiencing **anxiety and fear** and even drowning.

I would like to bring to your attention the life of one of the **Fathers of the Church called Boethius**. He was one of the most intelligent man of his time, being one of the most trusted senators of Rome. Being unjustly accused, he was sentenced to death. Boethius often repeated in prison: *“Against wisdom evil does not prevail. She reaches mighty from one end of the earth to the other, and she orders all things all things well.”* (Wis 7:30 – 8:1) In prison he wrote of his most important books called *The Consolation of Philosophy*. In it Boethius left us very important detail concerning our fears. He writes: **“Fear eliminates as its roots the very possibility of prayer and of**

**the theological hope, which form the basis of man's relationship with God.**

*"That is why prayer nourished by Sacred Scripture and particularly assiduous recourse to the Psalms always has a central place as the essential sustenance for all".* We remember that before his passion, in order to overcome fears and be able to walk in the deep waters of the sea and to overcome the world, **our Lord takes recourse to Psalms** in the Olive Garden and on the Cross. By his example, our Lord teaches us to take recourse to prayer in the moments of anxiety and not to let our fears eliminate the very possibility of prayer and hope.

And today's first reading shows us the depth of the heart of Jesus: He is not in the storm and heavy wind crashing rocks. Seeing Jesus walking over the waters and calming down the sea show to us that he is its Creator – the Creator of all the people wishing to govern all with His gentle hand. **Our faith is a two-way street: while Jesus asks us to have faith in him, He is telling us He has faith in us.** To drowning Peter, Jesus says: "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" **Our Lord called Peter to walk over the sea and called on him to have faith because He believed in Him. In today's world, in the midst of the anxieties in fears, Our Lord calls on us to have faith in Him because He believes in us. He believes that we'll be able to answer to him "with faith".**

As soon as Jesus calmed down the sea, the Gospel says: *"After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'"* These words of Jesus' disciples still could be told by the people in our days, if we know to respond to the difficulties coming upon this world "with faith and courage."

Let us ask through the intercession of our Lady for the grace to grow daily in our faith.