

JUMP IN—THE WATER'S FINE!

19TH Sunday Ordinary Time

Year A

1Kgs 19:9, 11-13; Ps 85:9-14; Rom 9:1-5; Matt 14:22-33

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The diagnosis was leukemia! Shocking...Depressing! Our eldest daughter, at 3 ½ years old, was dying. Her Pre-School teacher had been correct after all...she was not herself...she was listless...she was a very sick little girl. Her beautiful blonde hair was now falling out by the handfuls every night as we prepared her for bed. Brenda and I were helpless to come to her aid. As her father, a young Army Captain serving in an aviation assignment in Korea, I was totally unprepared for this devastating predicament over which I was absolutely powerless to prevail or even to help in the least bit. Where was God in our desperate time of need?

When the storms of life are raging around and through us... when we're quickly sinking into the despair of helplessness...when all hope is slipping away at a pace that makes your head spin, what do you do?...what do you reach for?...who do you turn to?

Desperate and disillusioned, Brenda and I prayed...we reached for faith...and we turned to the only One who we knew controls the seas, the wind, and the storms. Like Peter when he was sinking in the water, we also turned to Jesus....

The demand of our daughter's devastating illness indelibly etched the lives of her, then, young mother and father. Where was God, I had asked earlier? He was there in the midst of our turmoil... waiting patiently for our deliberate response. Yes, Brenda and I begged Jesus to spare our daughter, promising everything under the sun in exchange for His healing touch. But it was only when we...and especially Brenda, the mother...sincerely and resolutely offered back to God that which He had so graciously allowed us to bear and raise and love so deeply for so short a time...it was only then, that we both felt the peace that passes all understanding...the peace that God offers His children when they trust and obey Him unconditionally. Peace that comes from putting down our own efforts and will, and yielding our "all" to the Lord. It was only then that we could truly and willingly accept God's will for Mary Catherine. Although saddened by the distinct possibility of losing our daughter to this dreadful disease, Brenda and I experienced a most profoundly emotional release...to rest in God,

**no matter what the outcome, is indeed a beautiful...and
indescribable... feeling.**

**Well, we all know that God works in mysterious ways, and for
whatever reason, we were allowed to keep Mary Catherine. The
complete story of her miraculous healing is, however, for another
time. Suffice it to say that she became stronger and stronger. As
our faith began to quickly build, the devastating symptoms that
were killing our daughter, began to fade just as quickly.**

**How do we find God in the storms and struggles of our lives, in
the trials and tribulations we encounter in trying to imitate Christ in
living the Christian faith? God commands Elijah, in today's OT
reading, to stand on the mountain and await His passing by. In the
Gospel, Jesus makes the disciples set out across the waters to later
meet Him; and then He encourages Peter to "Come", jump in the
water and walk to Him. In each case, the Lord makes Himself
present amid frightening waves, wind, fire, and earthquakes.**

**Even if in a whisper, as Elijah heard amidst the tumult, as
today you hear His voice speaking to the predicaments negatively**

affecting your life, harden not your hearts to the true voice of the Master calling you to leap with faith into His loving arms...casting off your own will and taking on His will. Let Christ lift you from the sea of despair and hopelessness...and give you strength to tread upon the troubled waters of your life.

In a few minutes, the gifts will be presented to the priest for acceptable sacrifice upon this altar. As those gifts are presented, let God speak to your heart through the Holy Spirit, and let His divine light clearly illuminate those “things” in your life that ought to be offered to God. Then place them onto the paten and into the cup of sacrifice. And when you come to this table of plenty, feed upon Him...the Master of the sea and the wind...who grants you peace... Then rest in Him and in His holy will....

God bless you all....