



Gospel Mk 4:35-41

Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.

With the coming of evening, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?' They were filled with awe and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.'

Reflection by Greg Sunter

Having returned to the liturgical period of Ordinary Time and with it the sequential readings from the Gospel of Mark (for a few weeks at least), we can appreciate some of the literary structure and devices that were used by the gospel writer. Throughout this particular gospel, the writer has used a framing device – sometimes known as the Markan sandwich – to bracket sections of the gospel. By using these framing stories, the gospel writer draws greater attention to the substance of the 'sandwich' – what has been framed. This week's reading is the beginning of such a framed section that highlights some of the great miracles performed by Jesus but also draws attention to the disciples' lack of understanding about who Jesus really is. The section that runs from 4:35 to 8:21 is framed by two rhetorical questions: 'Who can this be?' asked by the disciples; and 'Do you still not understand?' asked by Jesus (8:21).

This week's passage includes one of the great nature miracles of Jesus – the calming of the storm. Some scripture scholars suggest that this story is a construction by the gospel writer to speak directly to the community for whom this gospel was written. The community of the gospel of Mark were consumed with doubt and surrounded by evidence of the world as they knew it falling apart. They were living the metaphor captured in the story: a boat adrift on the sea in the midst of an almighty storm. The cry of the disciples was the cry of the Christian community: 'Master, do you not care?' They felt that God did not care about the turmoil that surrounded them. The gospel writer reassures them that God does care about their struggle but at the same time chastens them for their lack of faith!

The Living Word

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

20 June 2021

First Reading Jb 38:1, 8-11

Here I have set the boundaries of the sea.

From the heart of the tempest the Lord gave Job his answer. He said:

Who pent up the sea behind closed doors
when it leapt tumultuous out of the womb,
when I wrapped it in a robe of mist
and made black clouds its swaddling bands;
when I marked the bounds it was not to cross
and made it fast with a bolted gate?
Come thus far, I said, and no farther:
here your proud waves shall break.

3. Then they cried to the Lord in their need
and he rescued them from their distress.
He stilled the storm to a whisper:
all the waves of the sea were hushed.
(R.)
4. They rejoiced because of the calm
and he led them to the haven they desired.
Let them thank the Lord for his love,
the wonders he does for men. (R.)

Second Reading 2 Cor 5:14-17

All things are made new.

The love of Christ overwhelms us when we reflect that if one man has died for all, then all men should be dead; and the reason he died for all was so that living men should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life for them.

From now onwards, therefore, we do not judge anyone by the standards of the flesh. Even if we did once know Christ in the flesh, that is not how we know him now. And for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here.

Gospel Acclamation Lk 7:16

Alleluia, alleluia!

*A great prophet has appeared among us;
God has visited his people.*

Alleluia!

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 106:23-26. 28-31. R. v.1

*(R.) Give thanks to the Lord,
his love is everlasting.*

or

(R.) Alleluia!

1. Some sailed to the sea in ships
to trade on the mighty waters.
These men have seen the Lord's
deeds,
the wonders he does in the deep. (R.)
2. For he spoke; he summoned the gale,
tossing the waves of the sea
up to heaven and back into the deep;
their soul melted away in their distress.
(R.)