

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Look to your covenant, O Lord, and forget not the life of your poor ones for ever. Arise, O God, and defend your cause, and forget not the cries of those who seek you.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 84)

ANTIPHON: Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation.

RESPONSE: Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation.

LECTOR: I will hear what the Lord God has to say, a voice that speaks of peace. His help is near for those who fear him and his glory will dwell in our land. **R.**

LECTOR: Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven. **R.**

LECTOR: The Lord will make us prosper and our earth shall yield its fruit. Justice shall march before him and peace shall follow his steps. **R.**

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

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord, who gives you your fill of finest wheat.

Or

The bread that I will give, says the Lord, is my flesh for the life of the world.

TODAY'S READINGS 1 Kings 19:9, 11-13; Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:22-33.

NEXT WEEK (20th Sunday of Year A) Isaiah 56:1,6-7; Psalm 66; Romans 11:13-15, 29-32; Matthew 15:21-28 Luke 3:10-18.

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your day with
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*When life
becomes too
hard*



9 August 2020 19th Sunday, Year A

Many would understand the feeling of being in a boat and battling against the currents and the winds. That's us alright, buffeted by bad faith and heartless conviction, but still in the boat when many others have abandoned ship.

Still, we go on and in the early hours of the morning, Jesus, who has sent us on ahead while he prays, comes walking across the chaotic waters, like a ghost it seems, and we're really shaken. "Courage. I am! Don't be afraid", he says, and like Peter we may take the plunge into the waves, for whatever reason, to suddenly falter. We feel 'the force of the winds' and are overcome by the danger we're in.

Sometimes life is too much for us. We find ourselves sinking and crying out to the Lord to save us. But what does it mean to save us? Jesus reaches out his hand to catch Peter. That's what we must do, allow ourselves to be caught, so that, in turn, we might reach out to and catch others. The gospel enacts our coming to faith, involving us all in taking this leap of faith, however faltering, allowing ourselves to be caught up in him.

As Jesus and Peter come aboard the boat, the wind dies down and they acknowledge him as the Son of God. Just like the prophet in the first reading we often wonder where we can hope to find God in our lives. What if

it's in these moments, as we struggle to deal with pain, exhaustion, the sadnesses that threaten to sink us. Often, we wish it were otherwise. To the prophet, God comes, finally, in a 'gentle breeze'. In the gospel it's in a powerful headwind, but it's in this moment of peril, through the action of Jesus, that God is revealed, made real.

There is something quite hands-on about the experience. It's not simply a case of handling the distress and fear as best we can, but finding in the midst of them, that Jesus is our saviour - the one who saves us, when we give over trying to do it all ourselves. Imagine this hands-on experience in church; not simply at the quite formal sign of peace, but as happens say, when someone collapses and those nearby respond immediately, trying CPR, ringing an ambulance, doing whatever to save the person.

That's the sense of what Jesus does here. And it's never simply a personal matter but involves all of us in the action, whether as the first responders, or the praying assembly. We are Jesus Christ. In recognising this we realise what has happened on the lake: we have been caught up in him. Or, as Paul describes it in the second reading, we are 'in union with Christ', so that others might live.