



# Bringing Home the Word

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)  
June 20, 2021

## Security from Life's Storms

By Mary Katharine Deeley

**M**y brother, sister, and I learned to sail when we were young. Of all the lessons we had, the one I remember nearly verbatim was “Signs of an Approaching Storm.” I can reel off the list as though it were yesterday: dark, low, fast-moving clouds; a sudden shift in wind direction and velocity; a sudden change in temperature.

To this day, when I experience any of these things, I close windows and make sure everything is inside. I think the apostles who were seasoned fishermen must have had similar training, and I have often wondered why they just didn't

make for shore when they noticed the signs. But then I remember that some storms move in very quickly and, if you are in the middle of the sea, you can't make it to shore easily. The apostles may have decided to ride it out and then realized they could not.

It must have struck the apostles as odd that Jesus was peacefully asleep while they battled rising water and fierce wind. They were afraid of losing their lives. When they woke Jesus up, Scripture says that he “rebuked” the wind and the sea. The same word is used when Jesus casts out demons. The result is peace—at least on the sea or in the person who is possessed.

But for the disciples and for us, the act inspires awe and not a little anxiety: “Who then is this?” The answer unfolds for us throughout the Gospels. Jesus is Lord over the wind and sea, over all creation, and over us as well. In storm or calm, he brings his peace and shows us God's glory. +

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### **A Word from Pope Francis**

Do not be afraid of migrants. Migrants are those who always bring us richness.... Today there is the temptation to build a culture of walls, to raise walls, walls in the heart, walls on the land.... And those who raise a wall, who build a wall, will end up a slave within the walls he has built, without horizons.

—Dialogue with teachers and students,  
April 6, 2019



## Sunday Readings

### **Job 38:1, 8–11**

Who shut within doors the sea, /  
when it burst forth from the womb?

### **2 Corinthians 5:14–17**

So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away.

### **Mark 4:35–41**

He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Quiet! Be still!” The wind ceased and there was great calm.

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS **QUESTIONS** REFLECTION

- Do you try to ride out life's storms alone, rather than asking Jesus in prayer to help you?
- When stormy times enter your life, do you have faith that Jesus will bring you peace?

# What Kind of Christian Are You?

By Kathleen M. Basi

In my freshman year of high school, I attended a talk hosted by an evangelical youth group. The topic was about “almost-ers”—people who weren’t quite good enough to get into heaven and who would therefore burn in hell forever.

I was fourteen! It terrified me! Who is ever good enough? Unfortunately, Christians often default to fear tactics in trying to spread the Gospel. Fire and brimstone can shock the complacent into an examination of conscience. What we do with that self-knowledge, however, is another matter. If our motivation for change is based on the fear of hell, it’s not likely to withstand the test of time. A quick tour of the Old Testament makes that clear. When Israel was afraid, the people turned to God. When the danger passed, the best intentions couldn’t keep them on track.

God wanted more for us. As John 3:17 says, “God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.” Jesus came to show us what God’s love really looks like when it mixes with frail humanity. It looks like the cross—like torture and suffering and self-emptying. But it also looks like resurrection.



The call to discipleship is a call to die to self, yes, but also to rise and live in love. Christ is risen, and true discipleship manifests in a desire to reflect God’s likeness in the world. Discipleship calls us to a love of God and neighbor that is so powerful it sends shock waves rippling through our communities.

Each day, we have a choice to make: Am I going to be a Christian who goes to church on Sunday to meet the minimum requirements for avoiding hell? Or am

I going to be a Christian whose longing for God reimagines and reshapes my ordinary, unexceptional life? Will I be a Christian who sees in every natural disaster the wrath of God, come down to punish sinful humanity? Or will I be one whose love for God spills over into action to ease the suffering of my neighbor?

When I become that person, I will no longer have the time, energy, or the need to worry about whether I’m “good enough” for heaven. +

**PRAYER**

*Lord, you bring compassion  
and peace to a fragile world.  
Strengthen my faith and help  
me trust your presence.*

—From *Faithful Meditations for Every Day  
in Ordinary Time*, Rev. Warren J. Savage  
and Mary Ann McSweeney

*Is your motivation for change based on fear or faith?*

## WEEKDAY READINGS

June 21–26

**Monday**, St. Aloysius Gonzaga:  
Gn 12:1–9 / Mt 7:1–5

**Tuesday**, Weekday:  
Gn 13:2, 5–18 / Mt 7:6, 12–14

**Wednesday**, Weekday:  
Gn 15:1–12, 17–18 / Mt 7:15–20

**Thursday**, Nativity of St. John the Baptist:  
Is 49:1–6 / Acts 13:22–26 / Lk 1:57–66, 80

**Friday**, Weekday:  
Gn 17:1, 9–10, 15–22 / Mt 8:1–4

**Saturday**, Weekday:  
Gn 18:1–15 / Mt 8:5–17

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