

**19th Sunday in Ordinary Time- A: 1 Kg 19:9, 11–13; Rom 9:1–5; Mat 14:22–33:
“Eyes on the Lord: Faith Above the Waves”**

There is an old joke about three religious ministers who were standing on a beach. One was a Catholic priest, another a Protestant minister, and the third was a rabbi. The Catholic priest walked across the water to a raft. The Protestant minister did the same. Then the rabbi tried to follow them—but suddenly he fell into the water. The priest looked at the Protestant minister and said, “Didn’t you show him where the rocks were?” Sometimes, brothers and sisters, **faith is about knowing where to look!** Today’s Gospel gives us a beautiful lesson: **when the storm is strong, keep your eyes on Jesus.**

The disciples are in the middle of the Sea of Galilee. It is the fourth watch of the night—between three and six in the morning. They are tired. The wind is against them. The waves are frightening. They have been rowing for hours, and they don't know when the storm will end. Doesn't that sound like life sometimes? There are moments when we feel that we are rowing against the wind: a difficult illness, financial worries, problems in the family, loneliness, grief, uncertainty about the future, or simply the anxiety we carry in our hearts. And then Jesus comes to them walking on the water. At first, they are frightened. But Jesus says, **“Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.”** What beautiful words for us today: **“It is I. Do not be afraid.”** Peter then says, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” Jesus simply says, **“Come.”**

Peter gets out of the boat and begins walking toward Jesus. Imagine that! Peter is doing something impossible because his eyes are fixed on Christ. But then something changes. Matthew tells us, **“When he saw how strong the wind was, he became frightened.”** Peter takes his eyes off Jesus and starts looking at the storm. And the moment he looks at the waves instead of the Lord, he begins to sink. That is often what happens to us. When our eyes are fixed on Jesus, we have courage. But when we spend all our time looking at our problems, our fears become bigger than our faith. The storm may be real. The waves may be high. The wind may be strong. But **Jesus is greater than the storm.**

And I love what Peter does next. He doesn't give a long prayer. He doesn't try to prove his strength. He simply cries out: **“Lord, save me!”** And Matthew says, **“Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him.”** What a comforting message! Peter had little faith, but he had enough faith to cry out to Jesus. And Jesus did not abandon him. Perhaps that is the prayer some of us need to make this week: **“Lord, save me.”** When you are worried about your family: “Lord, save me.” When you are afraid about your future: “Lord, save me.” When you are carrying

grief: “Lord, save me.” When you feel that you are drowning under the pressures of life: **“Lord, save me.”** And Jesus will stretch out His hand.

The first reading gives us another beautiful image. Elijah expects to find God in the strong wind, the earthquake, and the fire. But God is not there. Finally, Elijah hears **“a tiny whispering sound.”** God often speaks not through noise, but through silence. That is why prayer is so important. We need moments when we step away from the noise of the world and simply listen to God.

We cannot always control the storms around us. But we can decide **where we look during the storm.** If we look only at the waves, we become afraid. If we look only at ourselves, we become discouraged. But if we keep our eyes on Jesus, we discover courage, peace, and hope. The Church has often been pictured as a boat sailing through the stormy waters of this world. Sometimes the boat is shaken. Sometimes the waves are high. But Jesus is not far away. So, this week, whatever storm you are facing, remember three things: **Name your storm. Fix your eyes on Jesus. And pray Peter's simple prayer: “Lord, save me.”** The same hand that caught Peter is still reaching out to us today.

So, **keep your eyes on the Lord. The waves may be beneath your feet, but Christ is above the waves.** And when our eyes remain fixed on Him, even in the middle of the storm, we can say with the disciples: **“Truly, you are the Son of God.”** Amen