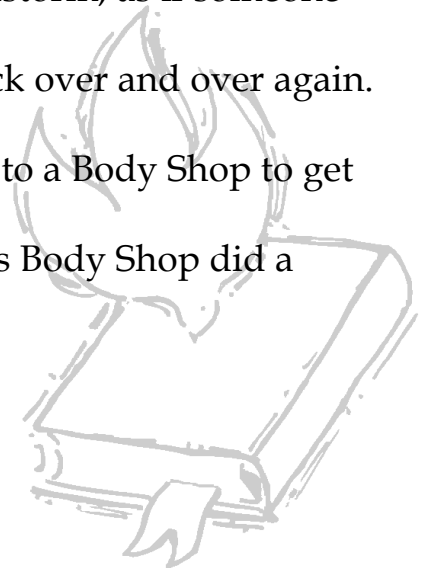


Homily
19th Sunday OT - A
Rev. Peter G. Jankowski
August 08-09, 2026

1 Kgs 19: 9a, 11-13a
Ps 85: 9, 10, 11-12, 13-14
Rm 9: 1-5
Mt 14: 22-33

As many of you know, this year has not been very kind to the weather systems of our area. We have been pelted with hailstorms, with strong winds, tornadoes and with all kinds of destruction that took place. In the world of faith, we learn the hard way that water can build and water can destroy. The weather can build and the weather can destroy. Farmers depend on good weather for the benefit of their crops but when we get bad weather, the crops end up going just the opposite direction.

We have told you that our parish truck that I bought out of pocket for Artemio Ojeda for \$20,000 got nailed with a hailstorm, as if someone took a golf ball gun and shot it at Artemio's truck over and over again. After the hailstorm subsided, we took the truck to a Body Shop to get repaired. My friend Greg Bucharelli from Greg's Body Shop did a



wonderful job in doing the best he could to clean up the damage from the truck.

Pastor James Carr from Redeeming Life Ministries has been working with us as well because the people at Aroma Park were devastated by the destruction caused by the weather systems, especially in March. Our local parishes were able to give him around \$2,000 to help the people directly in Aroma Park; one of my cohorts down south gave Pastor Carr a check for \$6,600 to help out the people directly. Sometimes when we are giving money to causes, we do not know if the money goes directly to the people that need help the most. I have been working with Ted Peterson and he has been directing us to those individuals and those churches who work very closely with the people in need so that our resources are directed towards those who need help the most.

In addition, we also have done what we could to take care of those who are suffering in Hopkins Park, St. Anne and Kankakee and all kinds of different places within the area to help out as well. We do whatever we can for the people in need because a lot of the times the services that help our communities are not coming in our direction, us

being periphery communities of the diocese. The leaders in these small towns are very aware that our institutions of care focus on those in the larger cities so that our smaller communities have to fend for themselves, which is why we leaders in smaller towns have to get creative in how to make things work.

Over at St. Patrick's last March, the parish did not escape the damage of that hailstorm as well. During one of our fish fry events, the winds from the storm became so strong that one of the panels to our stained-glass windows that were installed in the early 1990s became loose was starting to flap around. Robert Piquet from Vista Painting took a very rickety ladder, climbed up to the panel that was flapping in the windstorm and taped it down enough so a little bit later, Wally Martin was able to climb up and put a silicon caulk on the panel to secure it and preserve our stained-glass window.

St. Anne's did not escape the damage either. That March rainstorm revealed the sins inflicted on our church building; we found out that the gutters were plugged up with refuse and the water was seeping over the gutters, cutting into the masonry of the church. We brought someone

out to inspect the building to find out that this damage was ten years in the making and is going to cost the parish just under \$10,000 to repair. We also found out this week that the recent storms wreaked havoc on our rectory roof, with damage allowing water to seep into our house kitchen.

To deal with the sins of power outages at St. Patrick's, an estate gift went towards purchasing two generators to power the church and rectory from a family who very much cared about those in the parish and left this gift to protect our buildings from future damage. Our friends from Alcoholics Anonymous are licensed electricians who have donated their services without charge to repair fallen electrical lines, install light panels on our buildings and installing air conditioning on the second floor of St. Patrick's gymnasium to provide solace and comfort to those who are suffering because we do not have any air conditioning in that building.

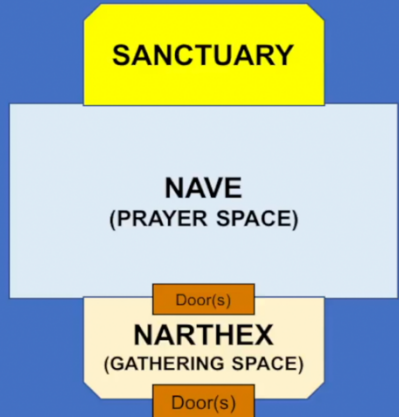
St. Anne's does not have the resources that we have at St. Pats and so we are a little bit more dependent on people like you and helping us out. What has happened at St. Patrick's with the parking lots is nothing

short of amazing; at St. Anne's, we have raised over \$10,000 from a \$60,000 goal to renovate a parking lot that was not maintained in the past that we will try to address in the present.

What we are doing to maintain buildings is necessary... but it is not easy. What also seems to be lost in all of this, and this is what we are trying to do to help people out, is when these weather systems come about, we are trying to find a way to say our churches are places where you can go for safety, for comfort and for protection.

The problem we have in our world, especially in the world of faith, is that many will think that the secular way is better, but look what is happening in our world today; look how people have been conditioned. Look at all the wars that have resulted from the human way when people turn themselves into gods. Look at all the hate; look at all the other problems that result from a life turned away from God. we have sex, drugs, violence, whatever it may be. It happens in the world. This home, God's house, is supposed to be a place of comfort, a place of security.

**THIS LESSON
WILL FOCUS
ON THE THREE
BASIC PARTS
THAT MAKE
UP A
CATHOLIC
CHURCH...**



When I teach university students about what makes up a church, a “tour” of a typical Catholic

church, so to speak (and I included videos of this tour online), one part of the church in particular directly related to our gospel passage today.

When we offer a tour of the church, we teach about the three main parts that make up a church building. We first have the gathering space or the “Narthex” of the church, a place where they are supposed to be welcomed, not treated with them disdain.

The third part of the church is called the “Sanctuary,” which is slightly elevated. This is where the sacraments are conferred and where God lives in the tabernacle. Just as much as you could find God in the Vatican or in the big basilicas of the world, God lives right here among us and God is accessible to us. Few people pay attention to God and ignore God in church because they are focused on each other and not on

God. Often, we find people talking to each other and forgetting about the one who created us and the one who wants to get us home. That we should be focusing on him rather than each other.

The central portion of the church, and the focus of today's homily, is called the "Nave." In Latin, "nave" is translated literally as "boat." If you turn your basic church upside down, the "nave" kind of looks like a boat. We are taught in the world of faith that as long as we stay in the boat, theologically, God protects us and God loves us, knowing full well that the world is going to destroy us. The world is the world but metaphorically, where we pray is called the "boat." As long as we are in the boat, God will keep us safe from the devil. will keep us safe from the problems of the world and we will be at peace.

As we learn all too often, many people do not like sitting in the boat on Sunday mornings; for them, sitting in the boat is boring; instead of gazing into the life of the one who loves us the most, most prefer to be anywhere else but in the one place that can protect our souls. In the boat we encounter God, the one who created us and the one to whom we need to prepare to spend the rest of our lives.

If we cannot learn how to spend time in the boat with God *now*, we are certainly not going to have an opportunity to do it after we die. So, we spend time in the boat. We spend time with God to lead us and guide us.

If we understand the theology of the nave (or the boat), then we also understand that if God is leading us and God is guiding us, spiritually we are protected from the evils of the world. If we have faith in God, miracles happen, as is illustrated by the wheelchairs and canes adorning the back of St. Anne's Church. If we spend time on the boat, God metaphorically can hold us by the hand so we can walk on the water. By staying in the boat, we can find calm through the torrential rains and the storms and the hurricanes and the tornadoes and we can get through the trials of life because God is with us.

Without God... the destruction of the world is very evident and very probable in our lives, not just for our bodies but especially for our souls. For people of faith, we understand the importance of the boat; we place our souls in God's hands by staying in the boat. When others are suffering, we find ways to help them out and get them *into* the boat.

We very much thank Pastor James Carr and *Redeeming Life Ministries* for being a model of faith that has helped us get through the storms, the literal storms of our time. We thank people like Robert Piquet, who went out into the storm to protect us. If we are people of faith, we need to do the same thing here – we need to lead and guide people into the boat so that they have a chance to be protected and saved as well. We must dedicate ourselves to making this nave, this boat, a refuge and a vessel of peace. If we can do this, then we have a wonderful opportunity to make this a metaphor of a safe haven for those who are in need, for those who need a place of rest.

Please consider helping us out however you can with the trials set before us and our community in need. Please also remember that this is your home; this is your boat. This is the place where you are safe. Even though our bodies may suffer in this boat, and the world is what the world is, our souls will be protected by God through the storms and God will protect them and love them, will protect us and love us, so that we can have that consolation, that love, that satisfaction of knowing that

God is with us. So we can share this boat and the grace held within with the people that we meet. This is our prayer.