

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, August 9, 2026

Brothers and sisters, if you look at this account from one of the other Gospels, you hear that Jesus was intending to walk by the boat, walk past them. He didn't want to stop. And that xxx, as in the first reading, or God is a small steel wind, they went by, or he saw the back of that upper tree, the Old Testament prophet, saw the back.

Brothers and sisters, there seems to be a trend in our time of people denying the miracles of our Lord, reducing them to the natural act, especially the multiplication. That is what has just taken place. Jesus has multiplied the loaves of bread. They wanted to run out and make him bread king. Look, we can fight everybody because we have a source of food here. He just fed them and went off. So, the people are now trying to reduce this. An example of this is, again, denying Jesus a miracle, reducing it in the national kingdom. So, what the thing is here, people are saying that Christ just simply inspired people to share what they already had with them thus feeding people through human generosity alone. Now, this is problematic on notable evidence.

What are we saying in the Old Testament? Elijah, who had the bread and oil multiplied by the widow, which kept him alive for three years. Or about the other prophet, who fed one hundred people with twenty loaves of bread, multiplying that. Or even the manna in Heaven, the miracle from that, and God, which are all prefigurements of the Blessed Sacrament, and the multiplication is also prefigured, as opposed to start with it.

But in our time, or at least in the New Testament time, depending how far back you want to go, we'll go back to St. John's Bosco. He experienced a multiplication of hosts at Mass. So, when he got up, and after he consecrated what was there, he noticed there wasn't enough for Holy Communion. We won't place blame here. That was already done in some other committee. But I will say that St. John Bosco knew there wasn't enough; the altar servers knew that there wasn't enough consecrated; and the sacristan knew that there wasn't enough consecrated. But he went out, after saying the Eucharistic prayers and administered the Sacrament. It never went empty. Everybody was able to receive our Lord in Holy Communion, and all the communicants were fed. And the people, the ones that knew, were amazed. And he said, "Why are you worried about that? Why is this an amazement? But what happens on the altar? Not in amazement. Greater is the holy sacrifice of the altar than the multiplication of communion."

But, however, let's come back to this modern argument. Are we supposed to believe that the miracle didn't happen? People merely had extra hosts in their pockets, came up, and dropped them in the ciborium and consecrated the hosts themselves? Is that the argument? And if John Bosco has multiplication, why would it be harder for our Lord? Some are saying, regarding today's Gospel, that we cannot know if it really happened. It just a story to help Christians have faith.

How do we know that Jesus truly walked on water? Brothers and sisters, we profess a belief in a virgin birth. We profess that God became man, that he suffered, died, and rose from the dead. We

believe that Jesus Christ is truly present, body, blood, and soul and divinity in the Blessed Sacrament. And multiplying bread, and fishes, and walking on water, this is where we draw the line? This is the hard we can't get over? If our Lord did not walk on water and today's Gospel reading is simply a literary device, then it would make logical sense to say the same for the rest. The virgin birth, the resurrection of Christ, the Eucharist. And you see them as merely stories to convince them of nice ideas. And with this type of thinking, there is little wonder why more and more Christians are coming to profess and see Jesus only as a holy man, or merely a good teacher, you know, like the Buddha.

Importantly, our Lord used miracles, supernatural wonders to demonstrate who he is. Jesus says, “*Believe the works, and you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father.*” Christ's miracles are meant to authenticate his mission in the eyes of Israel and just corroborate his claims of divinity. By the way they work! We hear at the end of this Gospel, they worship him, Jesus, the Jews knew that only God, who has absolute power over creation, can spend suspend the laws of nature in a miraculous way.

Now, I know that I'm preaching to the choir here, brothers and sisters, and I'm going to say it anyway. For clarification, Jesus Christ is God. He is the only begotten Son, the second person of the Trinity. He is our Lord and Savior. Through him we are united to his sonship and become adopted sons of God and daughters of God, the Father, Most High, through his sonship, we become adopted sons and daughters of God, the Father, Most High. He is who he says he is.

Now, there is a spiritual battle going on. Never forget that. We are being tempted to deny the reality of who Jesus Christ is and thus reject the gift of his salvation. This is the game. It's a real game. It's for keeps. It's for all eternity, a poetic way of saying this, eternity is a long time to be wrong.' Now, I say that because eternity literally means outside of time. We use time here, poetic, just a poetic way of saying it, to bring the point, the permanency of eternity.

Today, we hear about Jesus miraculously walking on the water and saying to the frightened apostles, "*It is I, do not be afraid.*" Well, this term, '*It is I*' in Greek, is *Ego eimi*, "I am". *Ego eimi* which means I am. We hear that in other places in scriptures. We should hear this passage, as Jesus is saying it: "*Do not be afraid, I am.*" In addition to Christ's power over nature, by walking on water, his statement points to God's self-revelation at the burning bush, where God says to Moses, "*I am who am*" *Ego eimi*. "I am the bread of life." God is the bread of life. "*I am. Be not afraid.*"

Moreover, we hear in the scriptures that the winds and sea obey him, Christ. The Old Testament credits God alone with this authority over the sea. Thus, we recall the Old Testament, the power of God at creation is separating the waters from their land - right in the beginning. Also, at the victory of the Red Sea, for the chosen people, where God separated the water and allowed dry land, and again, when Joshua led the people into the promised land separating the water and land.

The events recorded earlier in Matthew's chapter of Christ calming the sea when they were at a storm. Recall that he was asleep in the back of the boat. They were in a sea with an earthquake going on, and he was sleeping. He was resting securely in the peace of God knowing that he had everything in there - his faith in the Father. Our Lord goes beyond merely reassuring his disciples. He claims for himself a divine identity and authority. Choose who he is, his actions. Aware of this, the disciples worship Jesus, saying, *"Truly, you are the son of God."* If he were not, he would be guilty of blasphemy, false worship.

The previous experience of the apostles should have given them firm faith and confidence of hope and presence of Christ because they had already been in a boat during a storm with our Lord. And in that boat, they cried out to Jesus, just the way Peter cries out today, *"Lord, save us."* And both instances they, in their fear, call upon Christ as Lord. Not as a good teacher. Not someone like the Buddha, a holy man. *"Lord."* And both times he rebukes him for having little faith. Our Lord rebukes them with gentleness, from one who understands the weakness of fallen human condition. At times, we too, hear our loving, our Lord lovingly remind us, *"For you of little faith. I'm here with you always until the end of time."*

Well, we can draw deeper meaning from today's Gospel as with other Gospel passages and see it as a symbol of the Church. By the way, the message might be saying, "Stay in the boat," but that's another story. And we don't want to run Peter down. He is the only other person I know that walked on the water. More importantly, these events happened. Our Lord walked on water,

and so did Peter with Christ's grace. And this happened to make known Jesus' true identity. Moreover, the good news, which the Church continues to preach, is not merely a literary device, but the Word of God, Christ Jesus himself.

Brothers and sisters, our Lord gave himself on the cross for us, and he gives himself through the sacramental life of his Church that we will come to believe in him, that we may have faith, trusting in him In order that when the storms our lives fiercely hammer us down to the point of where we fear being swallowed up in a sea of doubt, anxiety, and fear, we can, as Peter did, turn to Christ, our Lord, and say, “*Jesus save me.*” And then, like Peter, we can see Christ's hand reaching down, taking a hold of us, picking us up and pulling us into his arms, helping you and me to remain secure in our Father's love. Now, and for all eternity.