

Text: Mark 6:45-56

Theme: Passing by on the Sea

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the Sixth chapter verses forty-five through fifty-six.

Boys and girls, how are you doing today? Good? Awesome! How did you get up here this morning? You used your legs right? You walked. It's easy to walk on dry ground. Have you ever walked on water? No, if you tried it, then you would sink. Yet, in our text for today, we see Jesus walking on the water. He even goes so far as to pass by the disciples who are in the boat. What does it mean that Jesus is going to pass by and yet joins the disciples in the boat? Ponder that as you hear the rest of the sermon and tell me after service. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

Jesus passing by

It can never be said that our Lord does not have a sense of humor. After all, He created the platypus. No one can look at that and say that God does not have a sense of humor. We see in our text for today another example of God's humor. Jesus has dismissed the crowds and the disciples. He has gone up on a mountain to pray as the disciples struggle against the wind and

waves. Jesus then goes to His disciples, walking upon the sea. He overtakes the boat of the disciples, walking upon the waves. Then Mark includes this odd humorous phrase, Jesus means to pass by them, until they cry out in fear, then He says, "Take heart it is I, do not be afraid." And joins His disciples in the boat.

Passing by in OT Use

Short thought this phrase may be, we have much that we can glean from it for our lives today. There are two major events in the Old Testament where God passes by someone, Moses and Elijah. Moses asked to see the Glory of God. God replied that He will make His goodness pass before Moses. Moses cannot see God's face but God does allow Moses to see His back as He passes by. As for Elijah, while he is in the cave, God sent an earthquake, a strong wind, and a fire but the Lord was not in the wind, earthquake, or fire. At the sound of a low whisper, Elijah wraps his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave as the Lord speaks to him as He passes by. Joins disciples and joins us!

Jesus meant to "pass by" His disciples as He walked on the sea, but He didn't, Jesus the incarnate second person of the Holy Trinity, God in the flesh who is at the same time both God and man. Who is God, begotten from the substance of the Father before all ages; And Who likewise is man, born from the substance of His mother in this age: Perfect God and perfect man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh,[9] this same one, Jesus, who meant to pass them by did not. He did

not pass them by: He got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. He said to them, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." They were looking at God face to Face and yet, "their hearts were hardened," and they couldn't grasp what they were seeing. There He was standing right there before them, they could have wrestled with Him like Jacob had, but they couldn't grasp what was unfolding.

Is Jesus in our midst today? Do people have hard hearts, are they blind to see Him? Has He climbed into our boat and yet remained unrecognized as God? Yes. The part of the building that you are sitting in, the part with the pews, has been called the Nave from the earliest of times in the church. From the word Nave we get words like Navy and Navel, they all refer back to the Latin word for ship. So here you are today sitting in the belly of a ship, sitting in the boat of the church building, while the waves and the winds of life are set against you, beating at the walls. And in Holy communion here comes Jesus who says, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." With the bread and the wine, Jesus comes to you with His Body and Blood for the forgiveness of your sin, He climbs into the boat with us, and the wind ceases.

You would think that the ship would be overflowing with people here to have God's precious gift of Himself for them. Alas, it is not, we can be just as hard of heart as the disciples, hearts that do not see or understand about the loaves. Yet, Jesus comes to all the same and gives Himself for heavenly food and forgives you for the times when your hearts are hard. The same Jesus who did not pass by the disciples, but had compassion upon them when they cried out in fear, had died as man in their place, and ours, and was buried as a man taking on the wages of our sins. Jesus,

who was raised from the dead, with Sin, Death, the Devil, and the world under His nail-stricken feet, comes to you in Holy Communion for the forgiveness of your sins, and the strengthening of your faith. He who has all of your enemies beneath His feet, He who has cast your sin into the farthest reaches of the sea, does not pass you by. Rather, He has compassion upon you and joins you in the boat unto life everlasting.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.