



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY June 24 & BEYOND”

“Have You No Faith?”



Coming to church this Sunday at All Saints, 6th and Pennsylvania Ave, San Diego, you will hear a very familiar story of the almost scary display of power over creation by Jesus Christ.

It is a short enough story that I'll just include the whole thing here:

When evening had come, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But

he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Let me take you on a little diversion – or so it might seem at first – and then on to a couple of reflective thoughts. Thanks.

“Jesus said to his disciples....” So, they are in a boat. This scene is almost impossible for artists to walk away from without providing their own depiction: Jesus, scared disciples, a small boat with a sail (probably), dark sky, choppy waves, water coming over the sides into the boat. Rarely, though, do you see this depiction with the “other boats” mentioned that were part of this flotilla. And that little exposition of the Word I just did points to another part of the usual but depleted depiction: 12 Apostles with Jesus in the one boat. But there are “other boats!” Sometimes “the disciples” refers to the Twelve. But often “the disciples” or “his disciples” refer to a much larger body of people who are following Jesus. So, when in this so familiar

story we read that “other boats were with him”, I think it is most likely a large movement of a larger body of disciples besides the Apostles.

Now consider this story. Jesus may have said to those in his boat, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” These words, though, are only spoken after he has “rebuked” (“Stop it right now!”) the wind and said essentially the same to the sea. As the story tells us the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. You know that when you are on a boat out on a lake and there is a dead calm, whatever you say to someone else in the boat will be heard by people in other boats nearby—sometimes across a great portion of a lake, even on land. The conversation in the boat may have in fact been only between Jesus and his closest disciples, but everyone else out there on the Sea of Galilee would have been having the same problem of a sudden and overwhelming storm that was sinking them, and then, looking to their Master, Jesus, across the waves, would have seen him stand up and perhaps say something sternly and maybe point. Maybe they wouldn’t have been able to hear him in the midst of the storm. But they certainly would have immediately benefited from whatever just took place. And then they would have heard his voice, and his words. “Have you no faith?”

By the way, I fully believe the authenticity of this story of Jesus and the storm. With that in mind, you know, personally, I think they made the right choice to wake up Jesus! He saved them. I think that is always the right choice when life’s issues are so overwhelming that we are scared out of our wits.....we should right then turn to Jesus and ask for help. “Whenever I am afraid, I will put my trust in the Lord” is from Psalm 56. But you see that is not the end of this reflection. Jesus did in fact save them, and it was witnessed by all those in those other boats, as well. Amazement, awe, fear of the Lord. But then Jesus brings the rest of it to them. “Have you no faith?” I do not see this as a statement of condemnation, nor is it “I am so better than you all.” No, this is a part of what Jesus expected them to be able to handle. They had already seen incredible miracles, healings, exorcisms, answers to prayer. And then THEY had been given authority to do the same, and they had rejoiced because....it worked! No, I think this is Jesus teaching. And the lesson is this: you have had faith to proclaim and witness healings and exorcisms in the people right in front of you. Now you need to see that same faith is good for the larger issues of life, as well. The sometimes intangibles, the sometimes mega and meta problems and concerns, even over what we so often consider to be “just is, that’s all”, like the weather, the earth, the culture, the civilization. A little closer to home, Jesus is also talking about your life over the last 20 years, or making scary decisions about your life and career and relationships to come to make sure that you are in line with God’s will -- bringing things to a dead calm so the forward progress “across your own lake” is unimpeded. Or at the very least, so you have the confidence to know that whatever comes up against you, you have the power and

the authority of God to rebuke the life-challenging, and glide through the lesser challenges.

This weekend my wife and I will mark something both expected on our parts, but also such a glorious thing, our 40th wedding anniversary. I am amazed at how many people have said to me over the last couple of weeks after they heard about it, “Wow.” Or just shake their heads in acknowledgment of a great feat. Recently, when purchasing a gift for my wife, the salesperson asked what it was for in friendly curiosity, and I said it was a small token of appreciation to my wife after 40 years of marriage. The salesperson went silent. They then said, “I’ve been married for two years. It’s been pretty much ok. But another 38 seems almost impossible to conceive.” Don’t you think this story about the battering waves, and the storm, and the disciples afraid of what comes next, sounds like a perfect application of God’s word? Indeed (as one of my favorite bishops used to say), sometimes the marriage boat collapses. But in the face of what they consider an awesome thing, an overwhelming sense of strength and commitment, what those still in their marriage have to hear is encouragement. *“It does take focus. And a lot of prayer. And stand together against the big things; live to enjoy the little things. And have confidence in God for you. And for goodness sake, make sure you have some fun together. I know you will make it.”*

With the Holy Spirit’s help, perhaps that will be enough for that salesperson to gain hope and confidence, and know not to sit and wait for a storm. But for absolute clarity in Christian teaching, here’s what we know and are called to do: Believe in this Jesus Christ – through whom all creation was made and thus has authority over it – and trust in him; and then, stand up to the storms yourselves as believers and do the same: pray, rebuke the storms, and reclaim the peace that is meant to be ours, now and forever. You don’t have to be one of the Twelve Apostles to do that. If you are a disciple of Jesus, then you are in those boats, and a witness, and a hearer of his word, “Have you no faith”, and so you, too, in great awe are able to stand and say, *In the Name of Jesus Christ.*

Father Rob Eaton, Interim Rector

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: **The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**

8:00a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn High Mass (Church)

7:00p Willan West 2018 Celebration—Concert of Healey Willan's Choral Works

—*The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue*—

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY: 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

FRIDAY: AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)