

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Apr 29th 2017**

In today's Gospel, the disciples of Jesus are sailing at night on a stormy sea. This is when they saw Jesus walking on water toward the boat. The disciples were afraid and wanted to help Jesus into the boat, but they suddenly landed safely. Of course the miracle of Jesus walking on water is the focus of this gospel, but when writing this reflection I was most impressed by the final lines – “but the boat immediately arrived at the shore to which they were heading.”

A vision of a stormy sea is often used to describe a tumultuous life or event, and in this Gospel the disciplines are noticeably concerned, afraid, and fretting. I can imagine the disciples busy at sea, trying to manage the boat in rough waters, while worrying about why Jesus had not yet arrived and wondering if he would be angry that they had left without him. Struggling to stay afloat is a familiar feeling in my daily life as I try to manage all the tasks at hand and keep my head above water. I often fret and worry in my daily life, and sometimes I fail to pay attention to what is most important.

I think those last lines about suddenly landing safely when they saw Jesus resonated with me, because those words remind me of a favorite saying of my mother's. When I am most worried about and fighting against all that is swirling around me, she tells me “life is what happens when we are busy making plans.” She means that I can't orchestrate everything perfectly – even though I have been known to try – so I should just stop all the fruitless effort and pay attention to what is happening now.

In this Gospel the disciples were caught in the storm swirling about them, but when they turned their focus to Jesus, the boat immediately landed safely without additional planning, management or effort on their part. The disciples had been so afraid of the storm and the situation, that they had lost their perspective. But as soon as they put their trust in God, and quit worrying, they realized they had already reached their destination. Today I will try to fret less, trust God more, and pay attention to my life as it currently is rather than worrying about what might be.

Amy Badura-Brack - Creighton University's Psychology Department cli