

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Jan 27th 2018

Probably not surprising, my reflection on today's readings focused on the Jesus' two questions to the disciples after he calmed the storm. "Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?" Certainly this is a dramatic scene and fear in the midst of a storm at sea is understandable. But my reflection took a slightly different turn because I am not currently in the midst of a storm or a place of great fear. I was reminded however that I often ask my retreatants/directees/myself, "what are you afraid of?" For me, this generally comes up when I am procrastinating. Whether it is procrastinating writing a reflection (that seem to always be late these days) or doing an unpleasant chore or having a challenging conversation. For me the procrastination is rooted in some fear. For instance, deeply buried beneath the procrastination of writing is fear that I won't have anything to say or that I will be judged. Beneath the procrastination doing the unpleasant chore is experiencing the unpleasantness of it and the loss of time when I could be doing something else more fun. Beneath the procrastination of having a challenging conversation are the fears of being hurt, hurting someone else and fear of anger.

Identifying these fears at the time generally helps me with a couple things. It takes some of the negative energy out of the situation and it reminds me to tap into my faith and trust that no matter what happens, God is with me. These two things then help me move forward.

Whether the storm is one that is raging and I feel like I am alone in a boat on the lake or it is a small storm, something like procrastination, this story reminds me to ask "What are you afraid of? And then I can hear Jesus ask "Do you not yet have faith?" I hope I will always be able to answer the second question with "yes, thank you for the reminder." and cling to one of my favorite quotes from Julian of Norwich.

"but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."

Today I invite us to notice throughout the day, what habits, what things do we do, that are really rooted in fear? Then remember to have faith, not faith that the situation will turn out how we want it to, but faith that God will be with us regardless.

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