

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Apr 13th 2024

Do not be afraid

John is perhaps trying to present the state of the Church when he wrote the Gospel – The community was faced with tensions on various fronts. Believers were persecuted for their faith. The Church was like a boat caught in the storms of the sea. They panicked and were losing hope because Jesus was not with them on the boat.

This gospel passage reveals some facts: (1) Jesus watches everyone. He does not forget them. Jesus may not make things easy for us, but he lets us fight our own battles.

(2) Jesus comes. He comes walking on the waters to enable the disciples to make the last pull to reach to safety. When our strength is failing, he comes in support for the last effort, which leads to victory. In the Semitic culture, the sea was considered the abode of the devil. Jesus' walking over the sea meant he had defeated the powers of the devil and was accompanying the boat of the disciples – the Church. And his reassuring message is, "It is I, do not be afraid."

(3) Jesus helps. He watches, and he comes and helps. It is the wonder of the Christian life that there is nothing that we are left to do alone. When frightened and losing all hope of overcoming the tempests and turbulence of life in the world, the comforting message of the Lord is always there, accompanying us: "Do not be afraid. I am with you."

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