



Rembrandt's "The Storm on the Sea of Galilee"

Gospel Mark 4

By Marge Loenser

As we know, Jesus preached in a lot of towns in the area of Galilee. We know that the sea there, really a fresh-water Lake, was where some of his disciples lived and worked as fishermen. Here's a little geography background on The Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberius, Lake Gennesaret or lake Kinneret. It is a very interesting place as it is way below sea level, in fact 700 feet below sea level and one of the only lakes in the world so placed. It is about 12-13 miles long and 8 miles wide. It runs north to south in northern Israel and is fed by springs along the way and the Jordan river in the north, and the Jordan river flows out where John baptized Jesus.

When the cool wind blows down from the east over the mountains and mixes with the warm air over the lake, serious storms can set in, without warning, which was the case in today's gospel reading. The fishermen were right to be scared to death by the huge waves breaking over and into the boat.

Even though Jesus was in the boat with them, *they forgot Who Jesus was*. In their panic they forgot the passenger asleep in the stern, was "*The miracle worker.*"

They forgot that the sleeping Jesus in the back of the boat, was God, Lord of all. When Jesus aroused from sleep, and calmed the Sea, He was incredulous of their lack of faith in Him. (***Oh, you of little faith***) I googled “***of little faith***” and it said to have little faith is to have no trust in. This is something to ponder as we all suffer from time to time with our faith, or our lack of faith.

I think what this gospel reading is telling me is that I need to remind myself in times of darkness (sickness, loneliness, depression, loss and sadness) that Jesus is still in the boat with me. And even though I’m scared, He will not leave me. I’m learning to trust Him more and more and my spiritual friends remind me that he allows “***bad***” things to happen to sharpen and deepen my spirituality. I must learn to try not to be discouraged when things don’t go right. (Read the following:)

“When the signs of age begin to mark my body, and still more, they touch my mind, when the painful moment comes in which I suddenly awaken to the fact that I am ill or growing old, ...in all those dark moments, O God, grant that I may understand that it is You who are painfully parting the fibers of my being in order to penetrate to the very marrow of my substances and bear me away within Yourself. (As He has planned for me a place in heaven).” By: Tleillhard de Chardin, Divine Milieu

My prayer: Sweetest Jesus, asleep in the stern of the boat, how exhausted You must have been after preaching all day the parables of the kingdom to the crowds. How you loved your people, even knowing that most would not understand your parables. How they exhausted You. Dearest Lord keep refreshing me with your Holy Spirit when I lose my faith, my trust, because You Lord, never lose your love for me and You are always faithful to your promise to me that If I follow You, You will lead me home to the Father. Amen.



Marge Loenser is a member of Saint Marks Church in Sea Girt where she is Lector and Eucharistic Minister. She has retired from teaching CCD at Saint Marks. She has been a member of Catholic Women of Zion for about 30 years and is also a member of Mary Queen of Peace Prayer Community for about the same length of time. She writes for a monthly column for Saint Marks Bulletin.