

# Read

1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a

Psalm 85:9, 10, 11-12,  
13-14

Romans 9:1-5

Matthew 14:22-33

## LIVING THE WORD

### Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 9, 2020



#### REFLECTION

Why did the disciples think Jesus was a ghost? By this point in the Gospel, they had been with him for a while and probably spent all their time with him. What would the circumstances have to be that you would think one of your closest friends was a ghost? Jesus hadn't been crucified yet. The reading gives us an explanation—the disciples were terrified beyond reasonable thought (and it's not every day someone walks on water!). Even when Jesus reassures them that it is in fact he, they still do not believe. It is only after the danger has passed that they recognize Christ for who he truly is, the Son of God. There are many times in our lives when we are in uncertain situations and doubt God's presence. We let our doubt and fear overcome what we know and profess as our faith: God is with us, even in the midst of the storms of life. The next time you feel like God is distant, recall this Gospel passage and be reassured that Jesus is with you, holding out his hand to help you through your trials.



#### ACTION

Find a poem, song, or Scripture passage that can help reassure you of God's enduring presence, even in the midst of struggles. You can look online, ask friends and family for recommendations, or even look through the hymnal before or after Mass this week. You might also want to look through the Book of Psalms in the Bible—they were written as Israel's songs of hope, trust, and praise of God. When you find one you like, work on memorizing it and incorporating it into your regular prayer so that when you have those moments of fear and doubt, you know where to turn.



Listen to

Audrey Assad's version of  
*"It Is Well with My Soul."*

[https://www.youtube.com  
/watch?v=zY5o9mP22V0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zY5o9mP22V0)



#### ? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ When have you doubted God's presence in your life?
- ❖ When have you felt God's presence in your life?



August 9, 2020

# NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## LECTIONARY #115A

1 Kings 19:9a, 11-13a

Psalms 85:9, 10, 11-12, 13-14

Romans 9:1-5

Matthew 14:22-33

## Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

### Leader's Context

This Sunday, we hear the story of Jesus walking on water. Jesus' miracle of walking on the water is in response to the needs of the disciples who are frightened of the storm. Jesus gives Peter the confidence and encouragement to walk on water as well. When Peter's trust in Jesus falters, Jesus catches him and helps him up out of the water. He calms the storms and the fears of the disciples. The way of Christ is a difficult path to follow, but we can do so if only we trust in his guidance and rely on the help of the Holy Spirit.

**Q FOCUS:** *Jesus strengthens our faith to give us courage in the midst of our fears.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

At the end of this week on August 15, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We believe that Mary was taken into heaven, body and soul, at the end of her earthly life. This is an important teaching in the Catholic Church because it illustrates our belief in her as the one whom God set apart to bear Christ to the world. As such, God honored her obedience, trust, and love by receiving her into heaven at the end of her earthly life. This is a holyday of obligation, but because it falls on a Saturday this year, the obligation to attend Mass is removed.

### Church Teaching Connection

"The church believes that Christ, who died and was raised for the sake of all, can show people the way and strengthen them through the Spirit so that they become worthy of their destiny: nor is there given any other name under heaven by which they can be saved" (*Gaudium et spes*, 10).

## Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

### Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

### Gospel

Matthew 14:22-33

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

After he had fed the people, Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. At once Jesus spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

He said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught Peter, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God."

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

Today's reading follows directly after last week's Gospel account of the loaves and fish. Again, we hear of Jesus performing a miracle—he walks on water. No, there was not ice covering the water. There is no loophole here, it is simply Christ again demonstrating his humanity and divinity so that others may be saved. After having fed the five thousand, Jesus removes himself from the crowd again to pray, to reconnect with his Father.

► Have you ever worked so diligently or accomplished something that was difficult and near miraculous?

► Did you praise and thank God for God's help and for your success?

As he was off praying, Jesus' disciples got caught in a storm out on the water. The sea can be very unpredictable, and in Jesus' time, the disciples probably

did not have possess life jackets. The disciples might have thought that the boat was going to sink, with them inside it. How frightening it must have been to be in such an unpredictable situation. The disciples were unable to control the weather or make it to shore. They needed a way to remain courageous and calm during this tumultuous time. The way came to them in the form of Jesus walking on the water.

► How would you have reacted if you were in the boat with the disciples and saw a figure coming toward you, walking on water?

Once again, we see Jesus taking time out from his own prayer and reflection to help others. He recognizes their need and responds. Peter's response to Jesus' presence helps us to consider our own response to Jesus' invitation to trust him in all situations.

One way we can understand Peter's actions is to consider that he didn't have enough faith in himself. Jesus calmed the worries and fears of his disciples on that boat. Peter asked Jesus to grant him the courage and power to walk on water with Jesus. When Peter stepped out onto the water, however, he wavered and doubted himself. When he fell, he asked for Jesus to help him, to help him remain courageous and confident in his faith of himself. Peter had to believe in himself in order to follow Jesus, to know who he was in relation to Jesus. Finally, at the end of this passage, we hear the disciples proclaim Jesus as the Son of God. We need to have the courage supplied by the Holy Spirit and belief in our gifts and abilities to be able to follow Jesus as well.

► Have you ever doubted your abilities?

► What causes this voice of self-doubt for you?

Remember that Jesus believes in you and supplies you with the courage and gifts to follow him. When the voice of self-doubt rises in you, turn to Jesus in prayer to help you, just as Peter did.

## Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 6.

Jesus is always ready to help those in need.

Jesus walks on water, calming his disciples' fears and doubts.

Following Jesus is difficult, and we need to have courage and faith in our actions so that we can use our gifts to help others.

## Act on the Word

### Celebrating Your Gifts

For this activity, you will need paper, magazines, scissors, glue, pens/pencils, and markers/colored pencils.

To begin, distribute paper to each student and ask them to make two columns on the paper. In one column, they will write some of their self-doubts (for example, "I'm not pretty enough, smart enough, funny enough, etc."). Be sure to inform them that all people have self-doubts, even adults, even you! In the second column, ask the students to write a list of those gifts and talents that they have (for example, "athletic, good singer, smart, etc."). Once their lists are complete, have them discuss in small groups what they wrote down on both lists in light of the reflection on today's Gospel:

- ✧ How does God use their strengths and weaknesses to draw them closer to himself?
- ✧ What are areas in their lives that they need to work on to better trust themselves and God's purpose for them?

After discussing in groups, invite teens to share any insights they had with the larger group.

Following your discussion, give each person another sheet of blank paper and distribute the other materials. In the middle of the paper, have each person write their name. Ask the teens to decorate the remaining space with cut out words from the magazines that describe their own gifts and talents. Encourage them to also incorporate ways that they can or already do use those gifts and talents to spread the Good News of Jesus to the world.

### Closing Prayer

*Lord God,  
keep us from the fear that cripples us,  
that keeps us from venturing forth in  
new directions.*

*Let us hear the voice of your Son, saying  
to us, "Courage. Do not be afraid."*

*Through Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*

### For Next Sunday

*To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.*