

12th Sunday in Ordinary Time • B
June 20-21, 2009 • Christ the King

Jesus and the twelve had spent the daytime hours preaching. They were exhausted. They wanted quiet hours for a fishfry, wine, conversation, and sleep. But huge crowds pursued Jesus. Then as now He had huge box office draw.

He said to them: "Let's break camp and go to the other side." But, because it looked like a storm, the apostles did not want to ship out.

Peter's boat would seat a party of thirteen comfortably. All got in, but it was a boatload of unhappy campers. Soon the exhausted Jesus was in the stern asleep.

Initially it was a peaceful sail. The apostles were dozing. The only one working was the muttering Peter at the helm.

Then a storm arose. The weather watchers among the apostles had been correct.

The wind begins to whip up waves bigger than 6 feet. Humongous waves wash over the boat. Soon, everyone is drenched. In such a small boat things, it was terrifying.

Peter shouted, "Get that sail down" - though he used much more colorful language. The vessel was in danger of capsizing. They broke out the oars and aimed for the nearest shore. Those not rowing, bailed furiously.

In the midst of all this chaos, inexplicably, Jesus continued to sleep. But even more inexplicably, the apostles allowed Jesus to sleep. Finally, their nerves break, and in terror they shake Him awake.

The still sleepy Christ stood. Wind was whipping through His hair. His beard and clothing were sticking to His body.

Notice Jesus addresses the awesome sea. "Quiet. Be still."

There is a calm. The apostles are stunned.

Then He speaks to them, "Why were you so terrified? Where was your faith?"

It might be easy for us to say, "Silly disciples, where was your faith?" "Don't you know Jesus is with you?" If we had been there, we would have trusted....

Or would we?

How often in our own lives,
when a storm is breaking over our heads,
when the unknown scares the bejeebers out of us,
when we, or someone we know is threatened
do we forget that Jesus is with us always?
How often do we forget to 'wake Jesus up' and ask for his help?

How often do we long and need to hear Jesus address
our fears and worries with these words: "Quiet. Be Still!"

Based on a homily by Father James Gilhooley