

FEBRUARY 1, 2025 FATHER ERNESTO DE CICCIO

I have to admit, this is one of my very favourite passages from the Gospels. I remind people all the time, when we read these stories, we can't just read them as history. They are history, of course. This really happened. Jesus is the Son of God. He has power even over the forces of nature. He can work great and incredible miracles, calming the storm. But when we read this passage, like so many of the others, we have to say, "What does this say to my life?"

And every time I read this passage, I feel that it is the story of our life. Because our life is a journey. Hopefully, a journey of faith. It begins in our mother's womb. And it ends when we leave this earth, and come face-to-face with our God. And just like the disciples who were in the boat, we need to realize that Jesus is there. He was in the boat with the disciples, he's with us, along our journey. Not in some faraway universe, not able to see what's going on with us. But very close indeed, and very much present to whatever we have to face.

And of course, like the disciples in the boat, we run into storms. And I tell people all the time, most of the storms that we face have nothing to do with the weather. It's the problems of our life, the difficulties, the heartaches. We can't even count how many problems we run into over the course of the journey. And what do we do? Like the disciples, we turn to Jesus. We call to him for help. And you know that Jesus never turns a deaf ear. He doesn't close his heart to our plight. He comes to our aid, he hears us, he answers us. And he's the one who brings us peace.

What are the words that he says to the sea, to the storm? "Peace, be still." How much we need to hear those words spoken to us. "Calm down, relax." "Peace, be still." "I'm with you. Everything is going to be

alright." So don't be afraid. Jesus made all the difference to the disciples 2,000 years ago, when they ran into their storms. Jesus makes all the difference to us, whatever storm we have to face, whatever difficulty, whatever heavy cross we have to bear, Jesus brings us peace. And he continues to journey with us.

Now, what's not mentioned in this particular passage, is that the story does not end in the middle of the sea. Eventually, the disciples make it safely to the other side, to peaceful shores. And that's what we believe. We don't end up in troubled waters. We'll make it to the other side. The other side of this life, not just the other side of the sea. We believe that we're gonna get to heaven one day. After all our trials and tribulations, after all of our storms, after all the tears have been shed. We'll get there.

And every time we hear God's word, and celebrate the Mass, we renew our hope, our hope of eternal life. By the way, this is the passage that I tend to read whenever I go to funeral homes for a wake service. Because it reminds us that our life is a journey. But a journey that does not end here below. A journey that ends in God's own house. So as we continue to celebrate our Mass, let's thank God for our faith. Our faith that fills us with hope. The hope that one day we'll make it to peaceful shores. And dwell with Jesus, our saviour, for all eternity.