

Twelfth Sunday Ordinary Time - B 2021
Job 38.1,8-11///2 Cor.5.14-17///Mark 4.35-41

→four hunters were out tramping through the woods looking for deer.

→suddenly a large buck jumped out of the bushes and they all fired at once.

→[well] the deer fell down dead, but when they examined it...they found that it was hit by only one bullet...and they couldn't figure out whose bullet had killed the deer.

→while they were arguing...the game warden came by and they asked him to help figure out who brought down the deer.

→after briefly examining it...he asked whether there was a preacher in the group...and one of the men said he was...the game warden said the deer was his.

→amazed at his answer, the others asked how he had figured it out...

→and the game warden said that that it was rather easy...the deer was killed with only one bullet...and much like what the preacher often says...the bullet went in one ear and out the other.

→now unlike...that bullet (and what a might preacher say)...today we hear a story that perhaps is one of the most remembered stories of the gospel.

→as Mark tells it...Jesus had spent the day teaching and at the end of the day, Jesus and his friends get into boats to cross the lake.

→during the night...a swift brutal storm comes up...occupied with far more than a rowing cadence...the disciples are fearing for their lives...while Jesus remains fast asleep...unconcerned about all that is happening...///...

→fearful and afraid...the disciples panic and wake him up...only to have him rebuke the wind and calm the sea....

→[and] the episode concludes with Jesus asking the disciples... *“why are you afraid....have you no faith.”*

→two questions perhaps that many of us asked ourselves over the past year as we found ourselves in the midst of with pandemic...shuttered at home...and sheltered in place for weeks and months.

PAUSE

→this story reminds us all....of our own fears in life that we all have...and most definitely a “fear” that was thrust upon us in recent months.

→[you know]...FEAR...being afraid is part of our human nature

→whether we admit it or not.....every one of us has been afraid, or fearful at some time or another...

→this pandemic raised that level of fear in most of us

→and many of us will go to great lengths to either **deny** being afraid...or **conceal** it some way or **ignore** it at all costs....

→we will even try to fool others by pretending **not** to be afraid...but when you think about it..... **“fear”** is very much a real part of all of us

...whether it be of the darkness, or bad storms, or even the first hills on rollercoasters at Cedar Point...

→....and today’s simple story gives us an important lesson

→because what this story says to us.....is that no matter what storms, or disruptions, or challenges may come our way...including even a pandemic....there is always peace and calm upon the horizon, just as Christ calms the waters in today’s gospel story.

→and part of that *peace and calm* comes from our faith and trust Christ himself and our relationship to him

→someone once said... “fear does not prevent death from happening...but rather it prevents us from living.”

“Fear does not prevent death...it prevents life.”

PAUSE

→our lives today are full of changes and uncertainty, disappointments and setbacks....as a result it is important for us to also maintain a healthy and calm perspective....especially with those things we find to be fearful...or those things that make us afraid...

→and part of that healthiness and calmness...is knowing the presence of Christ in our lives....not only during the anxious "times," ...during the stormy times...but also in the good and calm times of life as well

PAUSE

→we all know people, perhaps even ourselves, who at times....have a tendency to pull out a rosary or turn to God when a crisis strikes

→it is a natural human tendency to turn to God when we feel panicky or anxious....

→but you see with any relationship in life...it is always easier to grow and develop that relationship...if we actively nurture that relationship on an on-going basis rather than hit and skip mentality....and the same is true with CHRIST as well

→...the point being...that we need to actively nurture our relationship w/Christ on a regular basis

→i.o.w. we need to know God, and be involved with God...in the good times as

well as in those fearful times

→and that is the lesson Jesus teaches to the disciples and to you and me when he asks “*have you no faith?*”

→[you see] all of us are going to have storms in our lives....

→it may be marital, personal, career, family relationships or maybe financial

→and it is in the midst of these storms, that we are also being called and challenged to offer some calm and quiet to one another

→however that can only happen if first we know Christ in our lives...if we speak Christ in our lives...and if we act as Christ in our lives

<PAUSE>

→being afraid is something we all experience

→the disciples were afraid in today’s gospel...and each of us will continue to experience fear throughout our lives as well

→there will always be storms in our lives

however, as we hear today...Jesus quieted the storm

he brought peace, and he calmed the winds

and the remarkable thing is that we are capable of doing the same for ourselves and others

→**IF** we allow Christ to **BE** a very real part of our lives....[and]

---**IF** we allow **our faith** to be stronger than our fears