



# Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 7, 2011

God Comes to Us

**Focus: To find God in unexpected places.**

## Lectionary #115

1 Kings 19:9a, 11–13a

Psalms 85:9, 10, 11–12,  
13–14

Romans 9:1–5

Matthew 14:22–33

## Catechist's Context

Each of us could tell a story about God's goodness. We could also tell stories of chaos or difficulty, and children are not isolated from struggle. It is faith that gives us the courage to recognize and acknowledge God, as Peter did, and to get out of the boat when Jesus calls. Our faith leads us to look for and discover God at work anywhere.

## Sign of the Cross

*All make the Sign of the Cross.*

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.**

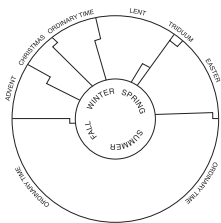
## Alleluia

*See Psalm 130:5*

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

I wait for the Lord;  
my soul waits for his word.

**Alleluia, alleluia.**



## Liturgical Calendar Connection

Ordinary Time is the longest season of the Church year, and we use the color green to mark the season. Have one of the children count the number of weeks of Ordinary Time in summer, another count the weeks after Christmas before Lent. How many total this year?

## Gospel

Matthew 14:22–33

**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.”

## Gospel Reflection

### Take Courage

This is a wonderful story. Jesus sends his disciples off ahead of him, dismisses the crowd, and then he goes up to the mountain to pray. This wouldn't have been unusual for Jesus. Prayer was very important for Jesus, and he prayed into the evening. The disciples headed away in their boat, but later in the night, the wind picked up, and the boat is rolling on the waves, water splashing everywhere.

☉ How do you think the disciples felt? Imagine what the disciples were going through: the wind is strong, the boat is rolling around, everyone is a bit scared. They look out at the water, and see someone walking across the water.

☉ How did they respond?

The disciples are really scared until Jesus tells them not to be afraid because it is he. The disciples are still not sure, so Peter responds with a test.

☉ What does Peter ask Jesus to do?

☉ How does Jesus respond?

☉ What happens to Peter when he tries to walk on the water?

☉ If you were Peter, do you think that you would have stepped out of the boat?

Once Jesus has helped Peter walk on the water and has saved him when he faltered, Peter does not doubt him any more. Jesus asks Peter why he doubted, comments that Peter has little faith, and they get in the boat. Once they are in the boat the wind dies down and all is calm. While everything was going on with Peter, the rest of the disciples are watching it all unfold from the boat.

☉ What do you think the other disciples were thinking? What do you think they were feeling?

This event had to confirm for the disciples what they already knew. Jesus was the Son of God. He revealed more of his identity by showing the disciples that he could even control water and wind.

We have things that happen in life that feel like storms. Jesus doesn't want us to have to go through the storms in our lives alone. He will be right there if we call out and we are not afraid to ask him to catch us. He always will. What we need most is a faith that keeps us from the fear that leads to self pity, or feeling sorry for ourselves. Self pity weighs the heart and soul down, and like Peter, we may feel like we are drowning.

☉ How strong is your faith?

☉ How does it make you feel to know that Jesus will always come to be with you?

## Focus on Church Teaching

Jesus came to us so that he could gather all men and women to himself. He is the Word made flesh, through whom all things were made, and he comes to us even when we least expect it.

## Who Can Walk on Water?

You will need paper and writing materials to do this activity.

Pass out paper and writing materials, and invite each child to write a short description of a “stormy” moment that he or she experienced in the past few weeks. This might be a situation that left the child feeling angry, sad, confused, or alone. Tell the children not to put their names on their sheets of paper. After giving them a few minutes to write, collect all of the papers, shuffle them, and redistribute them, making sure that no child gets his or her own paper again. Invite the children to read the descriptions before them and write down some suggestions of ways in which the person might “walk on water,” or respond in faith to Jesus’ invitation, rising above the situation. Talk about how each stormy moment can be an opportunity to trust that Jesus will help us when we feel unsure. You may want to collect the papers, shuffle them again, and distribute them for another round of advice. If time allows, read some of the situations and responses aloud, without naming any names. Leave the papers on a table or desk by the door so that the children can retrieve the papers describing their “stormy moments” in order to see what advice they were given by their peers. Remind them that one of the ways that Jesus helps us is by giving us each other.

## Jesus Is . . .

You will need paper and writing materials to do this activity.

Divide the children into two teams. Have the teams take turns coming up with epithets or other names that we sometimes use for Jesus. The team that comes up with the most examples wins. If the children are having trouble, get them started by giving them a few of the following examples. As an alternative to this activity, you might go through the following list and talk as a group about what each name tells us about Jesus.

- ☉ Christ
- ☉ Savior
- ☉ Lord
- ☉ Master
- ☉ Teacher
- ☉ Son of God
- ☉ Emmanuel
- ☉ Messiah
- ☉ King of the Jews
- ☉ Lamb of God
- ☉ Light of the World
- ☉ Bread of Life

# ***Prayers and Blessings at Home***

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### **Lectionary Readings**

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Psalm 85:9, 10, 11–12, 13–14

Romans 9:1–5

Matthew 14:22–33

### **Our Father**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass  
against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

### **Prayer for the Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Not in the wind, and not in the  
earthquake, and not in the fire  
were you present, O God,  
but where we least expect you:  
in a voice that whispers in the heart's  
deepest silence,  
in a call to venture forth against all reason  
and odds.  
Reach out your hand to us of little faith,  
that we may take heart and not be afraid.  
We ask this through your Son,  
Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you

**in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God forever and ever.  
Amen.**

### **Family Blessing**

During the summer months, the usual school routine is not present but the work schedule may remain the same. Children go off to camp, and vacations and other events can quickly take over family time. Make a special effort to say I love you to each family member every day, by blessing one another, saying: **God loves you and so do I.**

### ***Living the Liturgy at Home***

God is always at work in our lives all the time, even when we miss it because we are too self absorbed. This happens to all of us, young and old. Ask each member of the family to write down the moments in the week to come when they know God was right there with them. Sometime near the end of the week, put a blank piece of paper on the refrigerator and ask each member of the family to write down one or two of the examples they have noticed throughout the week. It is an affirmation of faith to see how God is alive in each of us!