

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

“Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.” These comforting words from Jesus to his terrified disciples in this Sunday’s Gospel (Matthew 14:27) echo deeply in our lives today. Like the disciples tossing on the stormy Sea of Galilee, we often navigate heavy personal, familial, or professional storms. We battle the fierce winds of anxiety, grief, economic pressures, or sudden life disruptions that leave us feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. This weekend's liturgy invites us to examine how we respond to these turbulent times—and reminds us to fix our eyes on Christ, who walks with us through every storm.

In the Gospel, St. Peter bravely steps out of the boat to walk on water but sinks the moment he focuses on the wind instead of Jesus. We often do the same when we let world crises, social media, or personal failures overwhelm our faith. Remember this vital truth: without Christ we drown, but with Him we live. When Peter cried, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately caught him. Christ is just as ready to grasp your hand and calm your storms right now.

To keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, we must intentionally cultivate spaces of silence. In the First Reading from the First Book of Kings, the prophet Elijah seeks the Lord. He discovers that God is not present in the spectacular, destructive forces of the roaring wind, the earthquake, or the fire. Instead, God reveals His presence in a "tiny whispering sound" (1 Kings 19:12). True spiritual attentiveness requires us to step back from the constant clamor of modern life. This week, find a few brief moments of quiet reflection daily. Turn off the television, put away your phone, and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart in that quiet whisper.

Please join us for our joint Parish Picnic next Sunday, August 16, at 11:00 AM at Transfiguration Church. Bring your family, friends, a favorite side dish, and an open heart to celebrate our community together.

-Fr. Luke