



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7

CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

Nineteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus.

MATTHEW 14:28-29

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For Adults

Life often feels like a storm. We worry about our families, our health, the future, and the challenges facing the Church and the world. Today's readings remind us that God is present not only in dramatic moments but also in quiet faithfulness.

In the first reading, Elijah expects to find God in wind, earthquake, and fire, yet the Lord comes in the sound of sheer silence. The Gospel echoes the same message. As the disciples struggle against the wind and waves, Jesus comes to them on the water, saying, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter walks toward Jesus as long as his eyes remain fixed on the Lord. When he focuses instead on the storm, he begins to sink—but even then, Jesus immediately reaches out and saves him.

St. Paul, in the second reading, shows another aspect of faith: a heart that continues to love and pray for others, even when they reject the Gospel. Faith is not only trusting God for ourselves but also carrying others in prayer.

The invitation this week is simple: look to Christ rather than the waves. We cannot always calm the storms around us, but we can trust the One who walks through them with us. In prayer, make room for silence, listen for God's gentle voice, and allow Jesus to take hold of your hand whenever fear begins to overwhelm you.

Overview

This Sunday's readings reassure children that Jesus is always with them, especially when they feel scared or worried. Young children experience many "storms" in their lives—being afraid of the dark, starting school, making new friends, visiting the doctor, or feeling lonely. The Gospel reminds them that Jesus comes to us in those moments and says, "Do not be afraid."

The first reading describes how Elijah expected God to appear in powerful ways, such as with a strong wind or an earthquake. Instead, God spoke in a quiet whisper. Help children understand that God often speaks to their hearts in quiet moments—when they pray, listen, or sit peacefully with Jesus.

In the Gospel, the disciples are frightened by the storm. Peter is brave enough to step out of the boat when Jesus calls him. Many would not do that. As long as Peter keeps looking at Jesus, he can walk on the water. But when he looks at the wind and waves, he becomes frightened and starts to sink. Jesus immediately reaches out and catches him. This is a beautiful image of Jesus' love: whenever we are afraid or make mistakes, Jesus is ready to help us.

The second reading reminds us that God loves everyone and wants all people to know him. We are invited to pray for others and to share Jesus' love through kindness and friendship.

Readings

First Reading

1 Kings 19.9, 11-13

A reading from the first book of Kings.

When Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain of God, he came to a cave and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence.

When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

The word of the Lord.

Observe a period of silence after the reading.

R. Show us your steadfast love, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
For he will speak peace to his people.
Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land. **R.**

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky. **R.**

The Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps. **R.**

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters:

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.

For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh.

They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

The word of the Lord.

Observe a period of silence after the reading.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Immediately after feeding the crowd with the five loaves and two fish, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them.

And early in the morning, Jesus came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear.

But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

Jesus said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Background

1 Kings takes place after Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal and had fled in fear from Queen Jezebel. Discouraged and exhausted, he journeyed to Mount Horeb (Sinai), where Moses had encountered God. Elijah expected God to appear in dramatic signs such as wind, earthquake, and fire, but instead God spoke in a gentle whisper. God often reveals Godself through quiet prayer and attentive listening rather than through spectacular events. Help children appreciate that God still speaks today through Scripture, prayer, loving people, and the quiet moments of our hearts.

Psalms 85 is a prayer of hope from God's people after a difficult time. They ask God to continue blessing them with mercy, peace, and salvation. The psalm expresses confidence that God never abandons those who trust in God. God is always ready to forgive us, help us, and fill our hearts with peace.

Romans 9:1–5 is a passage in which St. Paul expresses deep sorrow that many of his fellow Israelites have not recognized Jesus as the Messiah. Rather than becoming angry, Paul continues to love them and pray for them. He reminds us that God's promises first came through Israel, from whom Jesus was born. Help children to recognize that we are called to keep loving and praying for others, even when they make mistakes or do not believe as we do.

Matthew 14:22–33 Matthew's Gospel alone includes the story of Peter walking on the water. Peter steps out of the boat in faith, but when he focuses on the wind rather than Jesus, he grows afraid and begins to sink. Jesus immediately reaches out and saves him, showing that even when our faith is weak, Jesus is always ready to help. The passage ends with the disciples worshipping Jesus and proclaiming, "Truly you are the Son of God." Children experience many "storms," such as being afraid of the dark, starting school, feeling left out, or trying something new. This Gospel reminds them that Jesus is always with them. When they keep their eyes on Jesus and ask for his help, he gives them courage and never lets them face their fears alone.

Key Messages for Children

- † Jesus is always with us, even when we feel scared or worried.
- † We can trust Jesus because Jesus loves us and will never leave us.
- † God speaks to us when we pray, listen quietly, and read the Bible.
- † When we ask Jesus for help, he reaches out to us with love.

Key Messages for Leaders

- Emphasize that Jesus does not always remove life's storms, but He promises to be with us through them.
- Encourage children to discover that God often speaks through quiet prayer, Scripture, loving family members, and everyday acts of kindness.
- Invite children to develop a simple habit of turning to Jesus whenever they are afraid with a short prayer such as, "Jesus, help me."

Leader's Personal Reflection Questions

- † What "storm" in my own life is making it difficult to keep my eyes on Jesus?
- † How is Jesus inviting me to trust him more deeply so that I can confidently share that hope with the children?

Takeaway

- When life feels stormy, keep your eyes on Jesus.

The Liturgy

Procession from the main Church

At the proper moment, the priest invites the children to come forward. The leaders may come forward and stand facing the altar with the children. The priest then addresses the children.

Dear children, today Jesus reached out to St. Peter when he was frightened. Go with your leader and listen to God to find out how Jesus is always reaching out to you.

We will welcome you back soon.

Once most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the celebration site. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the CLoW room, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

Welcome

The leaders help the children sit and prepare. **Begin with the Sign of the Cross.** Help the children think and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The leader may offer the following prayer, in these or similar words.

Let us quiet our hearts and make the Sign of the Cross. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Almighty ever-living God,
Who taught us through the Holy Spirit,
to call our Father,
make us your children,
and help us obtain eternal life.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.
— Amen.**

Amen.

Invite the children to listen to the readings. Proclaiming all the readings is unnecessary; however, at a minimum, proclaim the Gospel.

REIMAGINED READINGS FOR CHILDREN

The readings below are intended for use after the children have heard the original reading. The intent is to allow the children to listen to the original reading and help them better understand it (not replace it).

Read at least the Gospel, then ask the children to sit down. You can then read the reimagined reading. Leaders may not have time to read all the reading.

Reimagined readers must always remain faithful to the original Scripture's intent, making it age-appropriate for children.

First Reading

1 Kings 19.9, 11-13

A long time ago, there was a prophet named Elijah. A prophet is someone God chose to share God's message with others.

Elijah had been working very hard for God. Elijah was tired and afraid, feeling all alone. He went to a mountain to pray and hoped God would help him.

It was very windy, like a tornado. Then the ground shook as if from an earthquake. Then a fire appeared.

God was speaking to him, but not through the wind, ground or fire. Then everything became very quiet.

In the quiet, Elijah heard God's gentle voice. God reminded Elijah, "I am with you. Do not be afraid." Elijah knew God had never left him.

R. Lord, show us your love.
God loves us every day. **R.**
He forgives us when we do wrong. **R.**
He fills our hearts with peace. **R.**
He stays close to us wherever we go. **R.**

St. Paul wanted everyone to know how much Jesus loves them.

Some people did not believe in Jesus. Instead of giving up on them, Paul kept loving them and praying for them.

We can do the same. We can pray for our family, our friends, and everyone we meet.

Last week, we heard how Jesus fed thousands of people with five loaves of bread and two fish. This week, he tells his friends, the disciples, to get into a boat and sail across the lake. Jesus stayed behind to say goodbye to the people. Then he went up a mountain to pray quietly to his Father.

As night came, the disciples were far out on the lake. Suddenly, a strong wind began to blow. Big waves rocked the boat back and forth. The disciples were scared. Very early in the morning, they saw someone walking across the water toward them!

At first, they were terrified. "Is it a ghost?" they cried.

But Jesus called out, "Don't be afraid! It is I!"

When Peter heard Jesus' voice, he said, "Lord, if it is really you, tell me to come to you." Jesus smiled and said, "Come." Peter climbed out of the boat and began walking on the water toward Jesus!

But then Peter looked at the big waves and felt the strong wind. He became frightened. He started to sink and shouted, "Lord, save me!" Right away, Jesus reached out his hand and caught Peter.

Jesus helped him stand up and gently said, "Peter, keep trusting me." Together they climbed into the boat.

As soon as Jesus got into the boat, the wind stopped, and the lake became calm.

The disciples were filled with wonder. They knelt before Jesus and said, "You really are the Son of God!"

Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Remember the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions.

What did you hear?

Have you ever been afraid?

Maybe you were afraid of the dark. Maybe you heard a loud thunderstorm. Maybe you were nervous on your first day of school. Maybe you were worried about visiting the doctor.

Can you tell me about a time when you felt scared?

In today's Gospel, Jesus' friends were in a boat on a lake. Suddenly, the wind blew very hard, and the waves splashed all around them. They were frightened! Then something amazing happened. Jesus came walking across the water toward them!

At first, the disciples thought it was a ghost. But Jesus said, "Do not be afraid. It is I." Those are wonderful words for us, too. Whenever we feel scared, Jesus says to us, "Do not be afraid. I am with you."

Peter wanted to be close to Jesus, so he stepped out of the boat.

Can you imagine walking on water?

If Jesus invited you to come to him, would you step out of the boat?

Peter walked toward Jesus, but then he looked at the big waves instead of looking at Jesus. He became frightened and started to sink.

What did Peter do?

He called out, "Lord, save me!" And what did Jesus do? He immediately reached out his hand and helped Peter.

If you were Peter, how do you think you would feel when Jesus held your hand?

Remember: Whenever you feel scared, worried, or alone, Jesus is always with you. He reaches out his hand just like he did for Peter. All you have to do is pray, "Jesus, help me." He hears every prayer and never leaves your side.

Alternative Reflection

This reflection is for older children, teenagers, or even young adults. It may provide CLoW leaders with a broader perspective, using the Church readings.

Have you ever been in a situation where you felt overwhelmed? Maybe you had a big test at school. Perhaps you were worried about making new friends, trying out for a sports team, giving a presentation in class, or dealing with a family problem. Sometimes life can feel like a storm, even when the sun is shining.

What kinds of "storms" do children your age face today? (Bullying, loneliness, anxiety, school, family changes, peer pressure.)

In today's Gospel, the disciples were in a real storm. The wind was strong, the waves were crashing against their boat, and they were frightened. Then, to their amazement, Jesus came walking toward them on the water. At first, they didn't recognize him. They thought he was a ghost! But Jesus immediately said, "Take courage! It is I. Do not be afraid." Those words weren't just for the disciples—they are for us too.

Peter wanted to trust Jesus. He stepped out of the boat and actually began walking on the water. Imagine the courage that took! But then Peter stopped looking at Jesus. Instead, he focused on the wind and the waves. Fear took over, and he began to sink.

Why do you think Peter started to sink?

Was it because the waves got bigger, or because he stopped trusting Jesus?

One of the most beautiful parts of this story is what happens next. Peter cries out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus doesn't wait. He doesn't tell Peter, "You should have trusted me more." He immediately reaches out and catches him. That's what Jesus does for us. When we are worried, discouraged, or afraid, he doesn't push us away. He reaches out to help us.

This week, whenever you feel worried or afraid, remember Peter. Instead of focusing only on the problem, turn your eyes to Jesus and pray: "Jesus, I trust you. Please help me." He will always hear your prayer and walk with you through every storm.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess their faith. Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who gave his life for us?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: I believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. The leader may need to repeat and paraphrase the petition, concluding it with the cue for the response: 'We pray to the Lord.' All respond to each petition by saying, "Lord, hear our prayer." Sample intercessions are below.

The leader says:

Leader:

Today we heard that Jesus is always with us, even when we are afraid. Trusting that he listens to every prayer, let us bring our needs before him and say, "Lord, hear our prayer."

R. Children: Lord, hear our prayer.

1. For the Church: may we trust Jesus and share his love with everyone we meet, we pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

2. For our world: may we who are frightened by war, storms, fires, or other disasters know God's peace and receive the help we need, we pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

3. For our families: may our homes be filled with love, kindness, forgiveness, and prayer, we pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

4. For those who are sick and for anyone who is suffering: may Jesus comfort them, give them strength, and surround them with loving people, we pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

5. For the prayers we hold quietly in our hearts... (pause), we pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader:

Loving Jesus, thank you for always being with us. When we are afraid, help us to trust you. Teach us to listen for your gentle voice, to care for others with kind hearts, and to remember that you are always reaching out your hand to help us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Return to the church

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and reflect on what they have heard and what they are now doing. Be mindful of children who may have difficulty finding their families.

Please note that the Handouts are available at:

Bulletin: TheKidsBulletin.com – Goodwill donation suggested

Quiz Handout provided by: thewordthisweek.net



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