

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 14:22-34

And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret. (KJV)

Believers seek peace and reassurance in a world full of uncertainty. Personal illness in the family, rising inflation and violent crime in the community can be causes of concern.

Winds of war blow across the world. Political controversy and gun violence have become common in America. Peace and order are desired and necessary for a stable and orderly life.

God's Holy Church provides the necessary place for seeking peace. The presence of the Lord Jesus Christ and Christ's teachings offer the reassurance necessary for believers.

The current Gospel speaks about the tossing waves of the sea where the disciples were located. The Lord Jesus Christ was not deterred by the tossing waves.

The Lord Jesus Christ was a calm and reassuring presence when the waves were heaving. Jesus Christ is the strong, certain and calming presence when life seems tumultuous.

Jesus Christ is ever-present for believers having Christ firmly in the mind, the heart and the soul. When illness strikes unexpectedly, when an accident or tragedy occurs, Jesus Christ is ever-present to lead the believer to peace.

Jesus Christ's love for each person is firm and irrevocable. Jesus Christ is within reach of each person. God's Holy Church offers the life-renewing and soul enriching teachings and presence of Jesus Christ.

Hope in Jesus Christ is always possible and beneficial. Hope arose in the Holy Apostle Peter when he saw Jesus. Jesus ultimately saved Peter when Peter's faith faltered.

The Lord Jesus Christ will grasp the hands of believers reaching out to Him in

today's world. Life's circumstances may be cause for personal unease. Jesus Christ is always the certainty in times of uncertainty.

The wind eventually ceased in the present Gospel. The disciples survived the tumult in the ship in rough waters. Jesus Christ provided a reassuring presence and had told them not to be afraid.

Faith in Jesus Christ and the presence of Christ dispels fear in believers. Confidence in Jesus Christ is always beneficial when the believers have strong faith and follow the ways and teachings of Christ.

Love for Christ increases as the believers learn more about Christ. Learning about Christ is unending. The Holy Gospel proclaimed in the Divine Liturgy facilitates the unending learning and growth in Christ.

Christian growth is to occur throughout life from the time of Holy Baptism until departure from this life. Keeping the mind, heart and soul focused on Christ and immersed in Christ enable growth to occur.

The disciples in the boat learned lasting lessons from seeing Jesus during the time of rough waters. The disciples' learned Jesus is the presence of peace in difficult times.

Jesus' ability to walk on the sea was verified and observed by the disciples. When the disciples remained focused on Christ, they eventually experienced peaceful waters and came safely to the shore.

Believers do well to keep Jesus Christ dear to the heart, mind and soul during the days of earthly life. Sooner or later difficulties arise in life. Jesus' presence in life assures the believer of peaceful travel through stormy waters.

The disciples' experience with Jesus on the stormy sea caused them to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. Attentive believers benefitting from Jesus each day in life do well to embrace and love Jesus as the Son of God.

Thank God for the Church offering the Divine Liturgy and the Holy Gospel around the world. Thank God for the presence and reassurance of Jesus Christ in the difficult times of life.

Jesus is always present. Jesus merits constant expressions of gratitude. Praying without ceasing to Jesus each day keeps the believer united with Christ and prepared for adversities.

Life is enriched and fulfilled when the believer is constantly united with Jesus Christ. Fasting, prayer, repentance, confession and communion keep the believer's relationship with Jesus Christ strong and lasting.

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost. Procession of the Honourable Cross.
Holy Maccabean Martyrs. Beginning of the Dormition Fast.
August 1/August 14, 2022. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic