

## 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)

God's Holy Church provides Scripture readings for each day of the year to guide believers to the Heavenly Kingdom and eternal life. Applying the Scriptures to daily life keeps the believer united with Christ and faithful.

The Church in love for believers provides the daily calendar of Scripture readings for believers to utilize. Being a Christian entails work throughout all the days of earthly life.

Tempests arise in life as they did on the sea in the current Gospel. Believers drawing near to Christ are to be resolute in faith. Peter's beginning to sink shows the peril of being afraid when approaching Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is always present to save believers reaching out in faith. Jesus saved Peter when Peter cried out as he began to sink. The Lord Jesus Christ is always worthy of a believer's confidence.

The Church through her teachings helps believers to put life into perspective and to understand life's events. The Church offers Christ's reassuring presence through the Divine services and Holy Mysteries.

Believers never need feel alone in facing the waves of life. Jesus Christ is ever-present. Constant prayer, reading the Holy Scriptures and attending the Divine services consistently keeps the believer united with Christ.

Individuals and families face challenges as life progresses. Sons and daughters may change dramatically as they grow in age. Husbands and wives may find their marriage is changing with the passing of time.

Jesus Christ is ever-present in the Church to lead believers to address the changes and challenges in life. The hunger in the soul for internal peace and love is addressed by Christ in the Church.

Christ's reassuring love and peace are ever-present. Just as Jesus did not let Peter sink into the water when he cried out, Jesus will not let contemporary believers sink in despair when they reach out in faith.

Developing and maintaining faith takes work. Maintaining a practice of consistent prayer requires dedication and is a form of work. Actively participating in the Divine services is a form of work.

Reading the Holy Scriptures takes effort. Dedication is necessary to read the Scriptures regularly throughout life. The desire for God's Kingdom and eternal life makes putting forth the effort worthwhile.

The disciples in the boat recognized Jesus as the Son of God and worshipped Him. Believers putting forth the effort to actively living in Christ in the Church fully experience Christ as the Son of God.

Peter's safety was secured when he cried out to Jesus. Contemporary believers find safety and security in reaching out to Christ in prayer to address life's challenges.

The journey to the Heavenly Kingdom and eternal life begins at the Baptismal font and continues until the last breath and heartbeat of life. Patience and resolute faith are necessary to the end.

Repentance enables believers to begin anew in Christ when errors in judgment and actions occur. Repentance restores the unity with Christ and brings the healing of forgiveness by Christ.

The Church has weathered the storms of every century. Believers benefit by placing full confidence in God's Holy Church. Now is the time to firmly grip the out-stretched hand of Jesus Christ in God's Holy Church.

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The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Martyr Christina of Tyre. Martyrs of Prebilovci and lower Hercegovina. July 24/August 6, 2023.  
Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic