

In the Gospel this week, Jesus teaches his disciples a crucial life-lesson: He has full authority, as God, over all the powers of nature and the cosmos. He teaches them not by prose, but by dramatic demonstration:

“On that day, as evening drew on, he said to them, “Let us cross to the other side.” Leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat just as he was. And other boats were with him. A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up. Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Quiet! Be still!” The wind ceased and there was great calm. Then he asked them, “Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?” They were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?”” (Mk 4:35-41)



How does this apply to us? I offer you a reflection from a Catholic Scripture scholar, Mary Healy, who has written a commentary on the Gospel of Mark:

Mark narrates this story not only to recount the memorable event of the storm, but also to reflect the experience of the early Christians. The boat bearing the disciples and the sleeping Jesus is an image of the Church (see Eph 4:14). The small and struggling early Church, storm-tossed on the seas of the vast Roman Empire, must have sometimes wondered why their Lord seemed to be asleep in the stern—absent, unaware, or unconcerned about the mortal perils that threatened them. How often have his disciples through the ages felt that way in the midst of “storms” of persecution, natural disasters, or personal troubles? But Jesus’ authority is without limit, and though he allows trials, in the end nothing can truly harm those who trust in him (see Luke 10:19). His reproach in verse 40 is an invitation for all Christians to awaken their faith in his presence and in his absolute authority over the cosmos. The true antidote to fear of earthly dangers is the faith that comes from “fear of the Lord,” the reverent awe of God that Scripture calls the beginning of wisdom (Job 28:28; Ps 111:10; Prov 1:7). “He who fears the Lord is never alarmed, never afraid” (Sir 34:14). Indeed, the most repeated command in Scripture is “Do not fear!” Why? Because to refuse to give in to fear disables the enemy’s strategy, which is to dissuade Jesus’ followers from their mission. When we have no fear, the enemy trembles in fear. [Healy, M. (2008). [The Gospel of Mark](#) (pp. 95–96). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker]

Isn’t it true, we all experience “storms” in life and are tempted to think God is absent, unconcerned, asleep at the wheel? Jesus teaches us that God does allow disasters and trials of every kind even to those closest to Him; yet, in His sovereignty and power, He remains in control and is actually very close and attentive to us. In the end, the storms of life, with the help of God and with the strength of faith that only He can give, will end in great calm – His disciples will grow in wisdom, humility, courage, and all the virtues. Our trials can be terrifying, but if we know God is alongside us, we know the victory will be ours.

Your Servant in Christ,
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