

12th Sunday OT Year B
June 21, 2015

Let us cross to the other side.

Readings: Job 38:1, 8-11; 2 Cor. 5:14-17; Mark 4: 35-41

“Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?” When Jesus spoke these words to the disciples, they may well have been as disconcerting to some as they were comforting to others. After all, since Jesus was not a fisherman, some in the boat may have felt that they were spoken out of naiveté from one who was unaware of the dangers of the Sea of Galilee.

Certainly, they were fearful. Fear can paralyze us, just as a lack of vision can stifle the power of the workings of the Holy Spirit within us. Jesus was willing to risk the storms in order to cross to the other side—but why? To escape opposition? To find a new field for teaching? It is uncertain; perhaps it is symbolic. Presumably, the violent squall that came up was not foreseen; nevertheless, Jesus was asleep at a critical time. The cry of the disciples that evening has been repeated untold times through the ages—“Where are you Lord, in our time of need and time of fear?”

In truth, Jesus was not demonstrating indifference at all, but teaching a valuable lesson about trust. When all seems lost and we are in trouble, it is often then we forget that He is with us in the boat, symbol of the Church. He calls us forward nonetheless. “Let us cross to the other side.”

The first piece of advice I received when I arrived in Italy for studies ten years ago this August centered on the busy streets of Rome. When you cross the streets, look straight ahead, and whatever you do, do not hesitate—or else they will know you are a tourist. Don’t worry—they must stop for you when you are in the crosswalk, or else they will lose their license. I confess, my initial thought was of a slightly more selfish nature—I was thinking more along the lines

about what would happen to me! I was not concerned about the Roman citizens losing their driver's license.

Yet, within a few weeks, I saw the wisdom of crossing to the other side with firmness of resolve and purpose. I needed to look like I knew exactly where I was going, even when I felt lost and unsure in a foreign city.

“Let us cross to the other side.” The Lord always beckons us, continually calling us beyond where we are, drawing us into greater communion with Him through grace. The horrific events in Charleston, SC was but the latest reminder to us of the existence of evil. But we also witnessed some of the most powerful statements of forgiveness I have ever heard, as family members briefly addressed the alleged killer during his initial court proceeding- several in fact!

To show this kind of trust in the Lord in the midst of tragedy showed once again that hatred does not win- that sin does not triumph. In today's reading, Jesus was only asking of the disciples more trust. “Quiet! Be still!” Trust in the Lord who is the source of life and the source of your strength.

Our Archdiocese has undergone much change in the past week, bringing forth many emotions, mixed in with sadness, and even anger and hurt. Yet, in this transition, are we able to see the Lord in our midst, calming the seas, inviting to “Be still” and trust?

The Holy Father has seen fit to send to us an Apostolic Administrator, showing particular pastoral solicitude at this critical time. With God's grace, prayer, wise counsel and fruitful cooperation, may Archbishop Hebda help in the healing and lead us ever forward. Together with Jesus Christ as our true shepherd, “Let us cross to the other side.”