

## **When You're Pushed Out of the Boat**

**10 Pentecost A – Aug 9, 2020**

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Matthew 14:22-33

22 Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. 23 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24 but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. 25 And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." 28 Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

*This story is in a section on instructing the disciples about their mission. It is a story of miracles – there is no limit to what God can do – and of the power of faith: the disciples can do the seemingly impossible if they have sufficient faith. Jesus has just fed the crowd, in the miracle of the loaves and fish. He compels the disciples to embark (v. [22](#)); presumably the miracle has aroused popular enthusiasm – in terms of political freedom – rather than faith. Because the Sea of Galilee is shallow, storms arise rapidly. It was “early in the morning” (v. [25](#)); from the Greek, we know it was before dawn. Walking on water was beyond the disciples’ experience, so they are afraid that they are seeing a ghost. The three miracles are: Jesus walking on water, Peter doing the same, and the wind ceasing abruptly – that Matthew mentions it (v. [32](#)) shows that he believed it to be a miracle. Jesus brings outward and inner calm, and a deeper faith. The disciples acknowledge him as “Son of God” (v. [33](#)) for as God did at the time of creation, Jesus controls the waters, then believed to be chaotic and evil. Jesus is God’s agent of renewal. © 1996-2020 Chris Haslam; <http://montreal.anglican.org/comments/apr18m.shtml?>*

- 1) As if on a dare (If it is YOU....) the impetuous Peter is willing to risk getting out of the relative safety of the boat, rocking it, and leaving his friends in order to do something crazy. Because of COVID19 all of us have metaphorically been pushed out of the boat. To venture to the store, to travel to other family/friends, to conduct routine life business means we now have a massively heightened risk of getting this virus and potentially sinking beneath the mortal waves. Describe what you think Peter may have been feeling/experiencing and how does that compare to what you are thinking/feeling during this time?
- 2) Life involves risk. Sometimes we chose it in order to grow up and live life the way we want. Sometimes we are thrown into risky situations. As soon as Peter began to be aware of the significant storm and focused on that he began to sink. What are the sources you turn to when life's storms are all around you? In a world where terms like, "Fake News," "alternative facts," and "constant spin," are all attached to information that is available how do you determine what is "True" – and more importantly, what will help save you?
- 3) Jesus is the center of calm and he can bring calm into the disciples' presence and ours. How does that work in your life? Meditation, self-care, connectedness?