

19th Sun OT – Matthew 14:22-33

“Walking on the Water”

Another wonderful reading about Elijah from the book of Kings. What always catches my attention is that last phrase, “*a tiny whispering sound*,” such a contrast between an earthquake, a tornado, and a fire storm! God doesn’t need to be showy or flashy, just a tiny whispering sound. In fact, God is humble as in the incarnation of his son as a vulnerable human baby.

The reading of the Elijah’s experience of God reminds me of when my nephew was born, my sister Mary’s first born son, Aaron, a beautiful healthy baby. Only one big problem, he had a very serious cleft pallet. I was shocked, never seen one before, but knew of them. One of our Marianist brothers was born with a cleft pallet. Through a series of successful operations, he was able to overcome this defect and became a fantastic singer and guitar player. He was well known on the UD campus because of his group that played regularly at the Monk’s Inn around the 70’s and 80’s.

I really didn’t know what to say to my sister. I do remember clearly what her in-laws said, “He didn’t get that from our side of the family!” Their statement put me on the defensive side, ready to stan up for my new nephew. But when they suggested that they give him up for adoption, I was shocked, but knew my sister would never do that. I silently prayed for him, telling him that God loves you deeply, so all will be well in the end, even though I knew the road to recovery would be many operations in his future. His breathing made this *tiny whispering sound*, since his pallet had not closed. I thought like the sound of God in the Elijah story.

Today Aaron is a wonderful man with a delightful and teasing personality, and a great father of two beautiful children. Some people have visible handicaps and defects, but other people have defects that don’t show, defects of the personality. Peter was just such a man. He could put on a lot of bravado but when it came to deliver he let Jesus down. “I will die for you,” he said at the Last Supper. But Jesus predicted his denial.

In today’s gospel Peter asked Jesus, “Command me to walk on the water to you.” And Jesus said, “Come!” And then Peter walked on the water, until he became afraid of the storm and he sank. Sinking Peter, his defect caused him

to sink. What are our defects that cause us to sink before the Lord? Through baptism we take our first step upon the waters. We are meant to walk on the waters in faith and Jesus calls us. There are times when we falter through our sin, weakness, faults and Jesus waits for us to call out, "Save Me, Jesus!" and he does.

The theme song for the ***Chosen*** series come from today's gospel, "Walk upon the Water." We come to this Eucharist ready to walk upon the water of our baptism. We are reminded of this when we bless ourselves as we enter church. Because of our faults and defects, we cry out to Jesus to save us, "Lord, have mercy on us! Christ, have mercy on us!" In today's gospel, Jesus calls out to us to walk upon the water in faith.

After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God."

Walk upon the water! What defects or faults keep us from walking upon the water in faith? The Eucharist that we celebrate pulls us up and keeps us from sinking and it may be our neighbor's hand that reaches out to us.