

Gospel reflections



Matthew 14:22-33

²² Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³ After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, ²⁴ and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

²⁵ Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

²⁷ But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

²⁸ "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

²⁹ "Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

³² And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³ Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Sometimes an image can capture so much more than words. The artwork by Sieger Koder deepens my reflection on Matthew's account of the story.

The following approach to reflecting on the passage and artwork may provide an opportunity to be still in the presence of the God who holds you.

Imago divina

Lectio (reading)trusting that the Holy Spirit is there to help you, 'read' the image really SLOWLY. Some people find that systematically moving your eyes from left to right and top to bottom, helps to slow them down and notice detail. Let the image move deeply into your being, like nourishing rain into the soil. Allow it to touch you.

Meditatio (reflecting) ..reflect on the art work (or part of it) that has touched you, exploring what it means to you here and now. Let the image resonate with your personal situation; believe that through this process God is communicating with you, perhaps giving an encouragement or a challenge, or calling you to a deeper awareness of God's love for you.

Oratio (responding) ..now respond and talk to God about what you have been thinking and what you have noticed...pray as the Spirit moves you.

Contemplatio (resting) ..in this final and most important stage, sit quietly with God, at rest in the presence of the One who loves you. Do not worry that you may appear to be doing 'nothing'. Trust that the Holy Spirit is at work in the depths of your spirit, deepening your faith. Let the image and its message move from your head to your heart to dwell there in peace-full silence.

Gracious God,
You call us to let go of the things we cling to
and step out in faith,
trusting in Your love and provision.
Give us courage to step out boldly,
and sufficient faith to follow without fear.

Take our lives and our gifts.
Use them to accomplish more than we could possibly imagine,
so that, through us, Your kingdom might come
and Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.