

## The Word of God This Week

Set time aside each day this week with other members of your household, with other members of your parish or alone to listen to and reflect on the living Word of God. Use these passages from the Lectionary that are assigned for Liturgy this week. Reflect on how the Lord is inviting you to a deeper union with him.

### TODAY\*

**1 Kings 19:9A, 11–13A**  
**Romans 9:1–5**  
**Matthew 14:22–33**

### MONDAY

**Matthew 17:22–27**  
*"The Son of Man is going to be betrayed . . ."*

### TUESDAY\*\*

**Matthew 18:1–5, 10, 12–14**  
*" . . . unless you . . . become like children, you will never enter the kingdom . . ."*

### WEDNESDAY

**John 12:24–26**  
*"Whoever serves me, the Father will honor."*

### THURSDAY

**Matthew 18:21–19:1**  
*" . . . forgive your brother or sister from your heart."*

### FRIDAY

**Matthew 19:3–12**  
*" . . . Moses allowed you to divorce . . . but from the beginning it was not so."*

### SATURDAY

**Matthew 19:13–15**  
*"Let the little children come . . ."*  
\*Feast of Saint Lawrence  
\*Solemnity of Pentecost Sunday

## You Can Walk on Water

In three of the four Gospels, Jesus comes to his disciples walking on the water. But it is only in today's Gospel from Matthew that Peter decides to join him. The walking on the water is properly seen as an epiphany miracle. Here, Jesus is revealed as one clothed in the power of God who subdued the waters of chaos at creation and saved Israel through the waters of the Red Sea.

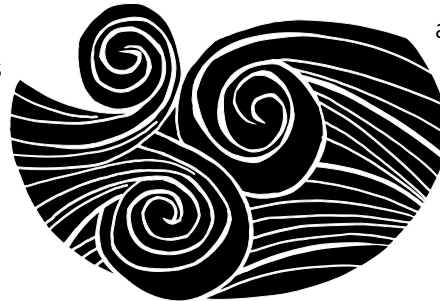
What is remarkable about today's Gospel is that Peter wants to do what Jesus does. Peter is often noted for his brashness, but assuming the attributes of the creating and saving God seems excessive even for him.

Even more astounding, Jesus accedes to Peter's request and invites him to step out of the boat. It is as if Jesus was

saying, "Sure Peter, you can be God too!"

As bizarre as this interchange might seem, it is not far from Matthew's point. Following Jesus is not simply a matter of living his teaching or copying his actions. The very power of Christ is given to us. We share in his divine life. Of course we are not perfect as Christ is, nor do we assume a position in the Godhead. Peter found this out soon enough as he began to sink. Nevertheless, this Gospel story insists that we carry the holiness of Christ within us. Discipleship does not encourage us to cower in the boat.

It calls us to step out in faith and do things beyond our imagining. We take that risk, knowing that if we have overstepped our abilities, Christ will be there to catch us.



## The Faith of the Church

It was in their discussion of the role of priests that the bishops of Vatican II presented one of the clearest descriptions of Christ working through his followers. Christ works through his ministers to achieve his Father's will in the world. In this way, Christ remains the source and the origin of those who would do the work of the Church (Cf. *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests* #14).



## Questions of the Week

Peter does not step out of the boat on a calm, sunny day. His vessel was battered by the waves and was far from land. These violent conditions are meant to remind us that when Christ calls us, fear must often be overcome.

### Adults

*When have I allowed fear to prevent me from speaking the truth or acting to promote goodness?*

### Children

*What good thing is Jesus asking me to do, and if I am afraid, am I willing to ask his help?*

Visit us at [www.FaithFirst.com](http://www.FaithFirst.com) (click on "Gospel Reflections") and share today's Gospel reading as a family.

## Responding to God's Word . . .

Jesus' invitation to Peter to walk on the water is a call to believe in God's power. If our success is dependent only on our own abilities, excuses will often win out over service.

You might be much better at organizing than handholding. But if there is a person in your family beset with loss or pain, Christ can call to you as he did to Peter: "Come." Even if sympathy is not your strength, Christ can ask you to be his healing presence.

You might not be the most eloquent or assertive person. But if you see cruelty in your school or

workplace, Christ might invite you to stand up and speak out that such injustice must come to an end.

Many people may have more influence over others than you do. But if you recognize division or hurt marring the lives of others, Christ might lead you to be his agent of peace and reconciliation.

Christ does not only call followers. He enables them. When he charges them to act, they understand that they will not be alone. When he calls them to come, his disciples know it is time to walk on water and that he will be with them.

## SUGGESTIONS

Use one of these suggestions or one of your own to respond to God's Word this week.

**In the home.** Identify a family responsibility for which you feel poorly equipped. Remind yourself that Christ will be with you when you attempt to meet its demands.

**In the workplace or in school.** Ask yourself if Christ is calling you to act in his place toward someone who is in distress or in need.

**In the community.** Remember a time when someone surprised you by meeting the need of another. Affirm that person in the value of his or her action.



## Meditation Moment

Nobel Prize winner Dr. Alexis Carrell wrote a book called *Man, the Unknown*. In it, he makes this striking statement: "Prayer is the most powerful form of energy we can generate. . . . The influence of prayer on the human mind and body is as demonstrable as secreting glands. . . . Only in prayer do we achieve that complete and harmonious assembly of body, mind, and spirit which gives the frail human reed its unshakable strength."

### For reflection . . .

What is one effect that regular prayer has had on my life?

MUCH PRAYER, MUCH POWER!

LITTLE PRAYER, LITTLE POWER!

NO PRAYER, NO POWER!

ANONYMOUS

FROM *VISION* BY MARK LINK, SJ

## A Disciple's Prayer

Lord,  
I do not understand  
why you ask such things  
of me. I can point to many  
others who are more talented,  
more patient, more courageous  
than I am. Would it not make more  
sense to call them instead?  
But if you ask, I will answer.  
If you call, I will follow.  
If you invite me to walk on  
water, I will try, as long as  
you are at my side.  
Amen.

Carry this thought in your heart as a guide for your faith journey this week.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9

## Profile in Faith

### The Author of 1 Peter

The first letter of Peter is addressed to "exiles of the Dispersion." The title implies a group of people who felt alienated from their religious heritage and society. The author reminds them that they possess a dignity through their baptism in Christ and that their actions share in the mighty acts of God.

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