



74th Year

August 2, 2026

Pamphlet #31 (3818)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (Matthew 14:22-34)

"It is I; have no fear."

At that time, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately he spoke to them, saying "Take heart, it is I; have no fear." And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they entered the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

PEACE IN THE STORMS OF LIFE

The miracle presented in today's Gospel reading took place after the feeding of the thousands of people with the five loaves and the two fish, following the Lord's blessing. The

purpose of this narrative and of this miracle is to help every person come to know who Jesus Christ truly is and what His work is for the salvation of the world. The crowd that followed the Lord, now satisfied both spiritually and physically after the miraculous multiplication of the food, and comforted by the sight of Christ's Person, departed from the deserted place. The Lord then withdrew to a nearby hill in order to pray, having first instructed His disciples to board the boat and wait for Him on the opposite shore of the Lake of Galilee. However, when the boat reached the middle of the lake, a strong wind stirred up a terrible storm, so severe, that their lives were in danger. For a long time, the disciples struggled against the waves, but they were not drowning because Christ was praying for them as well. Through His prayer, He was conveying to them the love and providential care of God the Father. Then, the panic caused by the danger they faced, was replaced by an unprecedented terror at the strange sight they beheld at dawn. They saw a figure walking upon the raging waves, thought they were seeing a ghost, and cried out in fear. But that figure was the Lord Jesus, who addressed them, saying: "Take courage; it is I. Do not be afraid."

The power of God

The action, the power, of the word of God is not limited by space, time, or natural phenomena. The sacred Chrysostom says that "Where God wills, the order of nature is overcome." Thus, the Son and Word of God walks upon the raging waves, calls Peter to come to Him, saves him from sinking, because of his lack of faith, and calms the troubled sea.

With these same words, Christ also speaks to people of every age, because this is the work of God, as the Evangelist John points out: "My Father is working until now, and I am working" (John 5:17). The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit work unceasingly for the salvation of man in a mysterious and ineffable way, which nevertheless, is revealed as light, life, and the power of God through these three words of Christ:

Courage and fearlessness in Christ

“Take courage.” Have courage, for I am always with you – in temptations and afflictions, in sickness and dangers, in pain and suffering, in injustice and doubt, and also in joy and gladness. “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31) The Apostle Paul says, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31) In other words, if God is with us, who can stand against us?

“It is I.” This phrase reminds us of God's revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai: “I Am Who I Am” (Exodus 3:14). I am the One Who Is, the source of Life and Immortality, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty” (Revelation 1:8). The Lord continually comes to meet us, to impart to us His life, His light, His holiness, and His immortality, so that we may be united with Him both in this present life and in eternity.

“Do not be afraid.” Saint Porphyrios of Kafsokalyvia often repeated the following saying: “With Christ everywhere, fear nowhere.” Indeed, when a believer experiences Christ's presence everywhere and at all times in life, natural fear is transformed into complete trust in the Lord. One works, toils, strives, and struggles, but without anxiety or insecurity, panic or terror. For in Christ there is no gloom, melancholy, or introversion, because Christ is new life; He is Everything. Christ is joy; He is true life, the fullness of gladness and rejoicing. May these thoughts strengthen all of us amid difficulties and dangers, amidst the storms and tempests of life.

Archimandrite N. K.

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August 2, 2026: 9th Sunday of Matthew

Exhumation of the Relics of the Protomartyr and Apostle Stephen (428);
New Martyr Theodore (+1690).

Pl. 4th Tone – Eothinon: 9 – Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17
– Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34

NEXT SUNDAY: August 9, Sunday After Transfiguration
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16 – Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

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