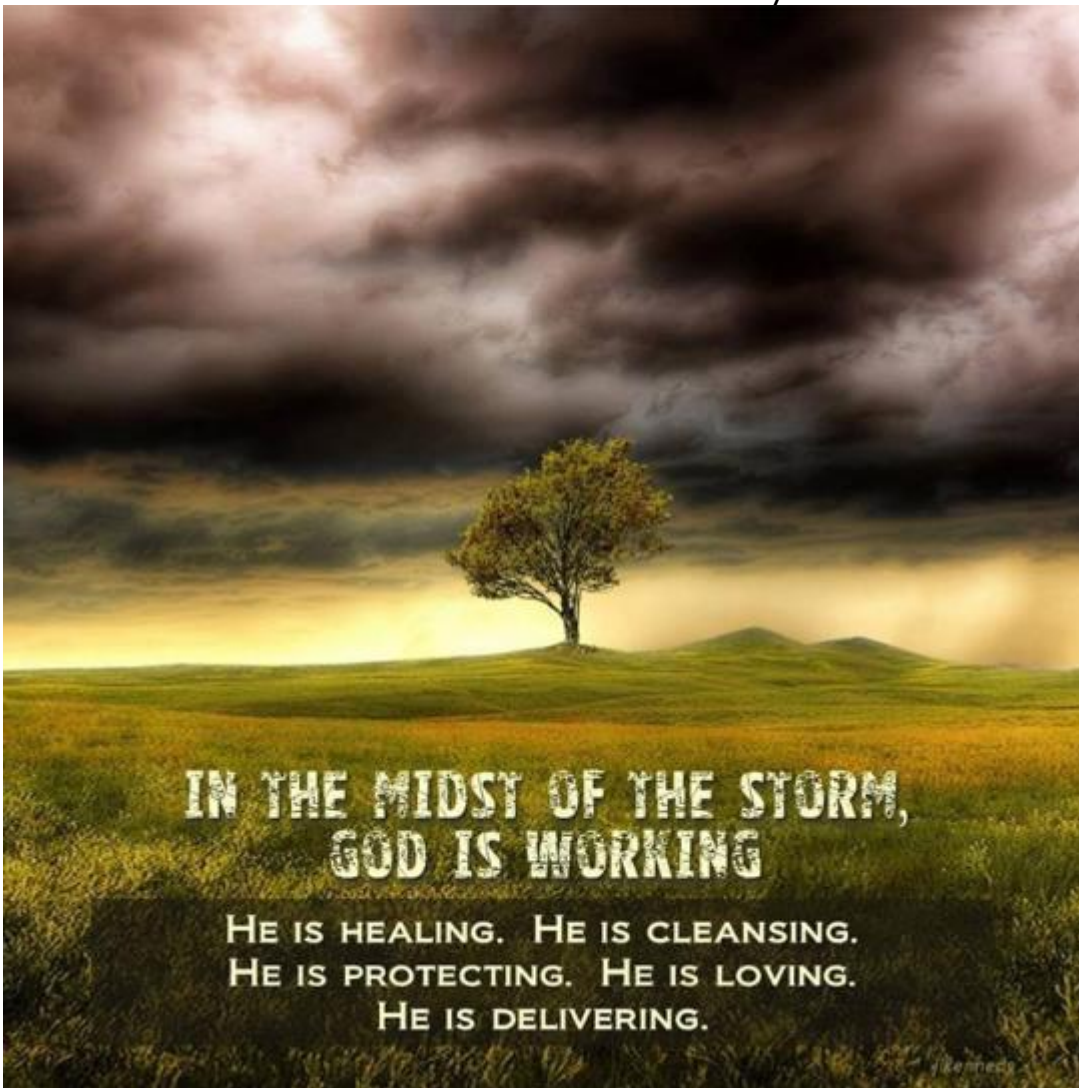


Dear Beloved,

We have another "Sunday School Story" this week, but there is as usual more to be learnt than we realised when we were in Sunday School.



May you have a wonderful week with many blessings,

Wendy

Community Day Saturday, 23rd September

Please encourage any community groups you know to have a stall.

--

Community Day Saturday, 23rd September

Please think about how you can help on the day

--

Wendy's last Sunday in the Parish 24th September

--

Steve Clark will not do any more sessions at this time.

--

Morning Tea after the Service every 2nd and 4th Sunday  
please volunteer for the roster.

--

Midweek Services every Wednesday at 9.30 all Welcome

--

Please volunteer for the church roster, well in advance.

--

Prayer and Praise

Wendy

Catherine

Edith and Colin Mayhew

--

Glenn Fletcher

Alan Hood

our wardens and Parish Councillors

--

Bernie and Gayle

Scott's wife Jennie.

--

Beryl Lucas Mary Mitchell's sister in Palliative Care (Cancer)

Beattie Russell and Jenni Roberts in Yallambie.

--

Liz Pirie

Leanne Lowery

Mary Mitchell

--

Peter & Julie Harris from Bredbo

all congregations in Cooma

--

The Catholic priest Father Mark Croker as he ministers from Bombala  
through to the mountains

--

for each other that we may be salt and light in this community

--

People everywhere who are living through war or disasters of every kind.

### Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.  
And also with you.

### Sentence

They cried out in fear, but Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.' Matt 14.26–27

### Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and  
worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Prayer of the Day

Mighty God and ruler of all creation, give new strength to our faith, that we may recognise your presence  
even when all hope seems lost. Help us to face all trials with serenity as we walk with Christ through the  
stormy seas of life and come at the last to your eternal peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### Genesis 37.1–28 (Edited)

<sup>1</sup> Jacob lived in the land where his father had stayed, the land of Canaan. <sup>2</sup> This is the account of Jacob's family line. Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them. <sup>3</sup> Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. <sup>4</sup> When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him. <sup>12</sup> Now his brothers had gone to graze their father's flocks near Shechem, <sup>13</sup> and Israel said to Joseph, 'Go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks, and bring word back to me.' So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan. <sup>18</sup> But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. <sup>21</sup> When Reuben heard this, he tried to rescue him from their hands. 'Let's not take his life,' he said. <sup>22</sup> 'Don't shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the wilderness, but don't lay a hand on him.' Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father. <sup>23</sup> So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe – the ornate robe he was wearing – <sup>24</sup> and they took him and threw him into the cistern. <sup>25</sup> As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh, and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt. <sup>26</sup> Judah said to his brothers, 'What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? <sup>27</sup> Come, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.' His brothers agreed. <sup>28</sup> So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.

### Psalms 105.1–6, 16–22

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name: tell among the peoples what things he has done.

<sup>2</sup> Sing to him, O sing praises: and be telling of all his marvellous works.

<sup>3</sup> Exult in his holy name: and let those that seek the Lord be joyful in heart.

<sup>4</sup> Seek the Lord and his strength: O seek his face continually.

<sup>5</sup> Call to mind what wonders he has done: his marvellous acts, and the judgements of his mouth,

<sup>6</sup> O seed of Abraham his servant: O children of Jacob his chosen one.

<sup>16</sup> Then he called down a famine on the land: and destroyed the bread that was their stay.

<sup>17</sup> But he had sent a man ahead of them: Joseph who was sold into slavery,

<sup>18</sup> Whose feet they fastened with fetters: and thrust his neck into a hoop of iron.

<sup>19</sup> Till the time that his words proved true: he was tested by the Lord's command.

<sup>20</sup> Then the king sent and loosed him: the ruler of nations set him free;

<sup>21</sup> He made him master of his household: and ruler over all his possessions,

<sup>22</sup> To rebuke his officers at will: and to teach his counsellors wisdom.

## Romans 10.4–15

<sup>4</sup> Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. <sup>5</sup> Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: 'The person who does these things will live by them.' <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness that is by faith says: 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?"' (that is, to bring Christ down) <sup>7</sup> 'or "Who will descend into the deep?"' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). <sup>8</sup> But what does it say? 'The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,' that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: <sup>9</sup> if you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. <sup>11</sup> As Scripture says, 'Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.' <sup>12</sup> For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, <sup>13</sup> for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' <sup>14</sup> How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? <sup>15</sup> And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'

## Matthew 14.22–36

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

<sup>25</sup> Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. <sup>26</sup> When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. 'It's a ghost,' they said, and cried out in fear. <sup>27</sup> But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'

<sup>28</sup> 'Lord, if it's you,' Peter replied, 'tell me to come to you on the water.' <sup>29</sup> 'Come,' he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus. <sup>30</sup> But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!' <sup>31</sup> Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?' <sup>32</sup> And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. <sup>33</sup> Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

<sup>34</sup> When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. <sup>35</sup> And when the men of that place recognised Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all who were ill to him <sup>36</sup> and begged him to let those who were ill just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

### Sermon

#### Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

#### THE PRAYERS

Let us pray for the world and for the Church. Response: Merciful God, hear our prayers.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Jesus said, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and who ever believes in me will never be thirsty. John 6.35

### Prayer of Approach

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

### Invitation to Confession

God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy, welcoming sinners and inviting them to the Lord's table. Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, with a sincere and a true heart.

### Confession

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Absolution

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### The Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.**

Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross. **We meet in his name and share his peace.**

**Hymn TIS 516 Here, gracious Lord, we see you face to face**

### OFFERTORY

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.

Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. **Blessed be God for ever.**

### Thanksgiving 3

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, it is our duty, our joy and our salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord.

For he is the true high priest, who has freed us from our sins and made us a royal priesthood to serve you, our God and Father.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy and gracious God, all creation rightly gives you praise.

All life, all holiness, comes from you through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, whom you sent to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

Hear us, merciful Lord; through Christ accept our sacrifice of praise; and, by the power of your Word and Holy Spirit, sanctify this bread and wine, that we who share in this holy sacrament may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

Who, when his hour had come, on the night before he went up to the cross to make full atonement for the sins of the whole world, offering once for all his one sacrifice of himself, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Therefore, in obedience to his command, we commemorate and celebrate his saving passion and death, his mighty resurrection and ascension into heaven and we eagerly await his coming again in glory. We thank you that by your grace alone you have accepted us in Christ; and here we offer you a spiritual sacrifice, holy and acceptable in your sight. Through Christ, receive this our duty and service, and grant that we who eat and drink these holy gifts may, by your Holy Spirit, be one body in Christ, and serve you in unity and peace. In your grace and mercy, bring us to the joy of your eternal kingdom with all the company of the redeemed. May we praise you in union with them, and give you glory through your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, Father eternal, in songs of never-ending praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

As this broken bread was once many grains, which have been gathered together and made one bread:

**so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life.

Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your body and soul to everlasting life.

Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you and be thankful.

### **After Communion**

Living God, in this holy meal you fill us with new hope.

May the power of your love, which we have known in word and sacrament, continue your saving work among us, give us courage for our pilgrimage, and bring us to the joys you promise.

**Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.**

notices

**Hymn TIS 531 Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing.**

### **Blessing**

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;

and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen**



This is another story we know so well, but we tend to focus on Jesus walking on the water, the bit we heard in Sunday school, and not really notice all the other bits of the story. This incident is a continuation of last week: Jesus is still coping with the news that John the Baptist is dead.

After Jesus has fed the multitude, he compels the disciples to go away. Sometimes in our lives we feel constrained to do something that we really don't want to do, it seems contrary to everything we think should be going on, perhaps even seems as if Jesus is pushing us away and yet the truth is that when we obey, we find that Jesus is with us in a new and more powerful way. If Jesus had not forced the disciples to embark on this uncertain journey, they would have missed the opportunity to see him as he is.



Jesus stayed and dismissed the crowds, perhaps a final blessing to send them on their way and then he climbed the mountain for an appointment with his Father. It is not insignificant that Jesus retreats to the mountain while he has sent his disciples out into the raging chaos of the sea. The mountain in Matthew's Gospel is a place for encountering God and hearing the proclamation of God's glorious kingdom. Just like Moses did, Jesus proves that he is both the leader of the crowds and the intercessor to the divine.

Jesus stays on the mountain to pray, he has had an exhausting day, his grief is still fresh, he has healed, taught, and fed the crowds and now he needs to just spend the time with his father to be refreshed himself and intercede for his disciples. Jesus' private prayer, in an interlude between one demanding activity and another, teaches us that every Christian needs to take time out for recollection, to speak to our Father, God and also that even when things seem to be going the wrong way we are never far from our Lord's heart.



Throughout the history of the church this story has been seen as a metaphor for the church, buffeted by winds and waves, far from any safe harbour. This is the situation in which Christian disciples usually find themselves. Throughout the history of the church, the last 2,000 years or so there have been very few times when the church found herself an accepted and honoured part of society. The mid 1900's when churches were full, and society assumed an appearance of Christianity is actually one of the very few times.

During his prayer on the hill, Jesus is still mindful of his disciples; he sees them trying to cope with the wind and the waves and comes to their rescue once he has finished praying. The Church, like the Apostles' boat, also gets into difficulties, and Jesus who watches over his Church comes to its rescue also, after allowing it wrestle with obstacles and be strengthened in the process.



Jesus comes to the disciples, walking on the water, the disciples have been struggling, not knowing if they would survive but also not knowing that Jesus has been praying for them. Like us so often in our lives, when we are struggling, and cannot see Jesus answering our prayer when he is in fact totally aware of our situation, has it all in hand, but wants us to grow just that little bit stronger.

You know there has been a few storms in my life that I haven't necessarily enjoyed but I have learnt to trust God and when Phil died, I knew that even though it was so hard, Jesus was right there just beyond the wave and would soon join me in the boat. It was because Jesus had allowed me to weather those storms that I had faith for this one.



The disciples do not initially recognize Jesus in the midst of the chaos. They are probably tired from the struggle. In the midst of this crisis, Jesus himself comes to them. When we are fighting the storm, when we think we cannot go on any longer Jesus is there and gives us that last bit of strength we need.

In this exhausted state with the roar of the waves and the spray of the sea drenching their boat, they mistake the Lord of creation for a ghost. Given the common perception of the sea as the venue of evil and chaos, it is hard to blame them for initially mistaking the figure of Jesus for a spectre of death. Our loving Lord always wants the best for us, we never need to be afraid.



Over their cries of fear, Jesus calls to them, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear". A more literal translation of this sentence would be, "Take heart, *I AM*, do not be afraid." Jesus reveals himself — not simply as Jesus, their teacher, but as "I AM. This self-revelation is a disclosure of Jesus' source of power. For Matthew's Jewish Christian audience, Jesus' words echo the divine name. Every time we heard the I AM, we head the echo of God's sacred name and know that Jesus and the Father are one and act in unison. In the midst of the storm the disciples heard Jesus' words "Take heart, *I AM*, do not be afraid." In the midst of our storms, we hear that self-revelation too. Jesus is with us in all our storms.

This self-revelation is beyond even his words. The last time Jesus revealed his power over the chaos of the sea he did so from within the confines of the boat. Even then, his power confounded the disciples. Now, he is displaying his power in the death-defying act of walking on the sea, he does not calm the sea, he walks through chaos and comes to his disciples. 'The peace beyond our understanding' is not a lack of storm but peace within the storm. In the midst of the storm, we look to Jesus and our heart is at peace.





When confronted with the inexplicable reality of a God who controls chaos, Peter does the inexplicable: he asks to meet Jesus in the tumult. Peter steps out in faith and does walk on the water. Jesus did not calm the seas to make Peter's steps easier. In fact, it is the wind that frightens Peter and causes him to sink. It was only Jesus' call that made it possible for Peter to make any strides in the first place. When we are totally focused on Jesus we can walk through the storm because it is Jesus who holds our attention not the wind.

When Peter looked at the wind, he began to be afraid and to doubt, he started to sink, he called out, "Lord, save me". If at any time we, like Peter, should begin to be frightened, we too should muster our faith and call on Jesus to save us. Just like the man who asked Jesus to save his son we say 'Jesus, I believe, help my unbelief.' Then our Lord does save us, and we instantly confess with those early disciples: "*Truly you are the Son of God*".



Joseph went through quite a storm in our Old Testament reading: imagine going from favourite son to slave in a single day. God did not rescue him from the storm immediately but walked with him and used him to save his people in the famine. 'But he had sent a man ahead of them: Joseph who was sold into slavery'.

Paul was talking about the same thing in our reading from Romans when he said, 'Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.' <sup>12</sup> For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, <sup>13</sup> for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' **We will be saved, not only from the consequences of our sin and mistakes but from any storm that comes into our lives.**



There are many times in our lives, and we never know when, when suddenly the wind gets up and the sea becomes rough. As we struggle to make our way through, sometimes we are aware of a presence with us, and if we listen through the roar of the waves and the wind, we may hear the voice that says *Take heart, I am, do not be afraid.*" And we will find that peace has come. Just as the feeding of the multitude and Jesus' walking on water had demonstrated Jesus' divine power, so then Matthew reports that when sick people even touched Jesus' garments they were healed. These stories are meant to reveal who Jesus is. Jesus is our lord who comes to us in our hour of need to save us and show us the way even when all hope seems lost.

It is in our thinking, our imagining, our praying as well as in all the events of our ordinary lives that we are invited to come, like the crowds and touch the hem of Jesus's garments, looking for salvation, healing, and peace.