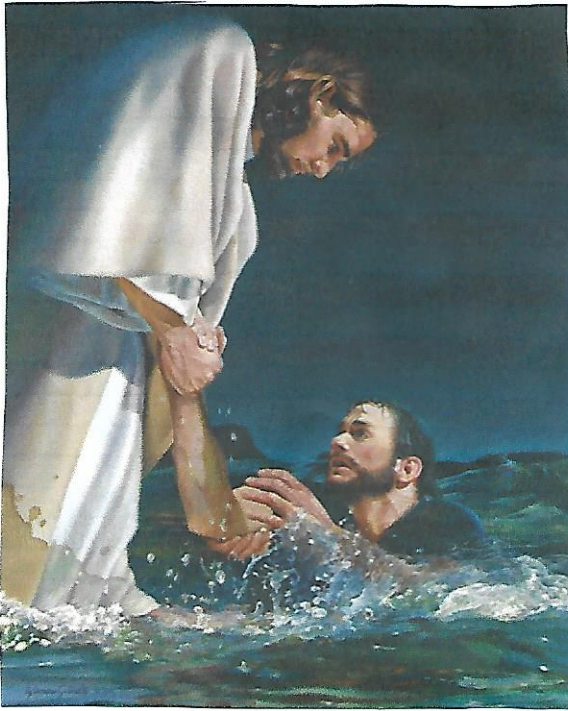


THE UPPER ALDE BENEFICE

The Nineteenth Sunday of the Year (Trinity 9)



Then he 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 got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Peter's misadventure conveys an important message about discipleship, especially the need to stand firm in our faith in the midst of life's trials. We all find ourselves in stormy situations from time to time. Sometimes we prevail and grow stronger in our faith, and sometimes we falter. Times of testing and adversity can show us where we are in our spiritual development and where we need to improve if we are to grow to Christian maturity.

It is encouraging to recognize that Jesus did not let Peter drown in the midst of a personal trial. The Lord shows himself patient with us; he will never abandon us in our struggle, allowing us to perish for our every mistake. He is Emmanuel, God with us, and he is always there with an outstretched arm, ready to lift us up again. The challenge is to learn from our mistakes, much as Jesus wanted Peter to learn that distraction and doubt were the reasons for his failure at sea.

Prayer for the Day

Almighty God,
who sent your Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of your Church:
open our hearts to the riches of your grace,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.