

Impact

Have faith. Trust the one who calms the storm.

Who or what do you put your faith in? You may immediately think of your faith in Jesus Christ, even while recognizing that faith in the Lord can sometimes be weak and shaky. Think more deeply about the question and you may realize that you sometimes put your faith in things - money, possessions, or positions of authority, for example.

Placing our faith in someone or something says a lot about who we are and who we want to be. Why we put our faith in people or things is even more telling. We may be looking for security or we may long for someone or something to take away our fear, concern, or worry; we may ache for certainty in an uncertain world, strength when we feel especially vulnerable.

People flocked to Jesus as news of him spread throughout the territory. Some came simply out of curiosity. Yet many came to believe in him, to place their faith in Jesus, compelled to risk trusting that a great and holy one was in their midst. The woman plagued by hemorrhages, for instance, and the synagogue official whose daughter was dying. Their faith was evident as they sought Jesus out in dire circumstances.

The disciples who traveled with Jesus grew in faith over time. They had been with him when he healed the sick; they heard the parables, and watched people's reactions to Jesus' stories, pondering their meaning. Yet even for the disciples, growing in faith in Jesus was a gradual process.

Put yourself in the boat with the disciples. Jesus had spent the day teaching people at the lakeshore. Late in the day, they went out in a boat, heading for the other side of the lake where more people would hear the good news of the kingdom of God which Jesus proclaimed.

A storm arose, tossing them about, waves breaking over the boat. Many of the disciples were fishermen. They knew the ways of life on the water. The storm was rough enough that it even rattled these seasoned seamen. It may not have occurred to them to go to Jesus in their fear. They probably thought was tired and needed to rest. Only when they came to him with their fear did they experience the fullness of Jesus' power as he calmed the wind and stilled the sea.

Jesus seemed to wonder what took the disciples so long before they called to him. "Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?" While they had witnessed healing and new life at Jesus' hands, their faith became "real" when they themselves turned to him in a time of great need. Awestruck, the disciples asked themselves, "Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?"

Come to the Lord with all of your life, when facing minor setbacks or when you're overwhelmed, and when life is good. Do not hesitate to bring your fear, worry, or doubt to Jesus, who desires to be at the center of your life. We may sometimes hesitate to turn to the Lord, perhaps thinking the situation is too small or that we only come to Jesus when we're in trouble. The gospels convince us there is no storm too big, nor circumstance too small to bring to the Lord. Have faith. Trust the one who calms the storm.

Impact this month

This month, use the quote below as a springboard for reflection on the ways the Eucharist shapes you to know and share Christ's love.

And what do Christians bring to the Eucharistic celebration and join there with Jesus' offering?

Their lives as Christian disciples; their personal vocations and the stewardship they have exercised regarding them; their individual contributions to the great work of restoring all things in Christ.

Disciples give thanks to God for gifts received and strive to share them with others. (SDR, p. 34)

"A selfish faith would be an unreal faith. Whoever believes in Jesus Christ and enters into the dynamic of love that finds its source in the Eucharist discovers true joy and becomes capable, in turn, of living according to the logic of gift. God is not isolation, but glorious and joyful love, spreading outward and radiant with light."
Benedict XVI, February 2012



Impact. Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.

When tiny becomes mighty

Throughout his ministry, in everything he did and taught, Jesus proclaimed the **kingdom of God**. He reached out to those who were sick, dying, in need of mercy and forgiveness. Jesus shows us that God's desire is that all of humanity might know and share love. Unexpected, sometimes confounding, sacrificial love.

Jesus tells us that the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed - the smallest of all the seeds on the earth, which springs up and becomes a large plant. If God's kingdom is the reign of love, then even our smallest actions on behalf of love can grow beyond our imagining. Think of all the opportunities we have to show and to share love every day.

Times when we put impatience aside, linger with someone who is struggling, give our time in service. These small acts expand our hearts and make Christ's presence known.

Tiny seeds of mercy, compassion, and caring grow into mighty expressions of the incredible love of God. Doing this is simple but it is not always easy. It requires us to make the perspective of the Lord our own, to have as our greatest desire that all will know and share love.

What tiny seed of love will you plant today? How does the Eucharist shape and nourish you to be a sower of the seeds of Christ's presence? What might be the mighty impact of your sharing in the lives of others and for the life of the world?