

## Sunday 'Spiritual Communion' in Ordinary Time

*You may wish to find a space for prayer in front of a cross, a candle, or a special place. The words in **bold** you are encouraged to say out loud as worship and prayer.*

### Opening Prayer

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members.

**We are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.**

### Opening Sentences in the Season of Ordinary Time

I pause for a moment to think of the love and the grace that God shown me in my life:  
I am created in the image and likeness of God; I am God's dwelling-place.



**This morning I ask for the grace to let go of my own concerns  
and be open to what God is asking of me,  
to let myself be guided and formed by my loving Creator.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

### Prayers of Preparation and Confession

**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**

How has God's presence in the world moved me this week?  
Where has it left my faith cold?  
Has an awareness of the Divine Plane consoled me or moved me to act in a new way?  
Imagine Jesus' presence here now .. turn and share your feelings with him...

You may wish to pray:

**Lord, have mercy.**

**Christ, have mercy.**

**Lord, have mercy.**



A reading from the Gospel

Read Matthew 14:22-33 (A reflection is attached to the end of the service sheet)

### Intercessions

Let us pray for the needs of the world, for our local community, and for those close to you.

End with the Lord's Prayer.

### **Our Father...**

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.

**O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,  
may I know you more clearly,  
love you more dearly,  
and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.**

Through the storms of life, O God,  
you are with your people in the person of Jesus your Son.  
Calm our fears and strengthen our faith  
that we may never doubt his presence among us  
but proclaim that he is your Son, risen from the dead, living for ever and ever. Amen

### Blessing and Peace

May the Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil,  
and keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace of the Lord be always with you



## Reflection on Matthew 14:22-33

Today we read about another of Jesus' miracles. You might feel you have never experienced an encounter with Jesus in the manner of the disciples in the boat. You have never seen Jesus walking on water as evidence that He is the Son of God. But once again, as we considered about last week's miracle, perhaps this story is not as far from our everyday experience as we might imagine.

Consider for a moment any time in your life when you have looked out at the events taking place and thought within them you could see Jesus at work. Perhaps you were in need of something: a new job; an answer to an unsettling question; healing for a friend or family member, financial need, and all of a sudden something happens which makes you feel you can see Jesus in the midst of it all. You may not have seen Him as a person but it feels as though Jesus has been there meeting a need or answering that question. Like the disciples you look out into the sea of life and there in midst of the battering waves and strong winds you think you can see Jesus there. Every Christian has had this experience to some degree or another for it is the start of faith in Christ. Somewhere, somehow in the mists of life's storms we can pick out what we think is Jesus walking towards us. And we have faith in His presence near us.

So the idea that we share the disciples experience of looking out onto the horizon and thinking we might just see Jesus is perhaps not so alien. Whether through some kind of coincidence, some kind of provision, some kind of comfort, we have all looked out and thought .. I wonder if that is Jesus! The comparison between our experience and the disciples does not end there. How often have we believed Jesus was at work in the storms of life and on seeing this said to Him and to ourselves ... I am going to step out here; I am going to walk towards you, to come closer to you Jesus; I am going to be more like you from now on; if this is you then command me to come to you Jesus and I will step out of the boat in faith and walk with you! Have you had these moments too? Moments when we respond to seeing Jesus in the midst of the storm and committing ourselves, like Peter, to a new kind of life. We make a new resolution, a new plan, we place a new kind of trust in Him. It is the human condition to want to respond to Jesus' presence by taking action. So we make a new resolution to live differently and we step out of the boat to walk towards Him.

And of course we once again do what Peter did. We start to walk on the waters of faith but very soon we become frightened. You see the waves do not subside and the winds do not cease and we start to wonder ... was it really Jesus we saw from the boat. Was it just a coincidence our needs were met, did we really find the answer we were looking for from God, will provision for our needs continue to be there or was it a one off fluke? We question Jesus' presence and we start to sink under the waves. And we reach out to Jesus .... Lord save me! These experiences, played out in the narrative of Jesus walking on water, are at the heart of any life of faith. If we want to be Jesus disciples there will be a recurrence of these moments again and again. Fearful of the storms we look out and we think we know we see Jesus there. We are comforted and step out in faith. We start to fear and we wonder 'was it really Jesus'? And so we cry out again Lord save me until His hand catches us and restores us to safety.

Let us not be ashamed or anxious about this pattern in our life but let us take heart that the end of the story is when the storms of life finally cease and we like Peter will say 'Truly you are the Son of God!'.