

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily  
Sunday, June 20, 2021  
12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Cycle B

I remember a friend of mine once said, “I am not comfortable in bodies of water because I do not know how to swim. Though I enjoy the beach, the rivers, and swimming pool, I am afraid of going too far or staying too long. On my first boat ride from a small island to a major city, I hardly slept the entire night of the voyage, my mind replaying scenes from the movie Titanic. I imagined myself a drowning Leonardo DiCaprio look-alike”.

I always hear Jesus tell me, “Let us cross to the other side”. But everything changed last year when we went into a lockdown. The atmosphere and the feeling in the parish and on the streets were unbelievable, something found only in the movies. That was the time I truly felt how it is to follow Jesus – to cross to the other side. I realized that the more we follow and get closer to Jesus, the more we join Him in “crossing to the other side”, and the more we experience violent storms in life. And let us not forget the fact that when the Lord called us, He simply said, “Come, follow me”, and nothing else. He never told us there would neither be giant waves nor violent squalls. I’m sure all of us have experienced different storms in life, especially last year during the pandemic. Some of us lost our loved ones and friends, some lost our job, some experienced anxiety and depression. And it is our faith that helped us to “cross” these storms of our life.

Our Gospel today shows us how God comes to us silently in the midst of so many things happening around us, without being aware of His presence. Mark tells us what happened next when they crossed to the other side – a violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so it was already filling up. Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”

The sea evokes a feeling of mystery and fear; this is why it symbolizes life itself – so uncertain yet so beautiful and inviting, always ambivalent. But the sea, like life, is a gift that we need not control or capture and hold in our hands. The trick is to “float” on and flow wherever it leads us, because ultimately, it is God’s. What really matters is that Jesus is with us in every crossing.

The French have a saying: “A ship looks safe and stable when at the harbor; but ships are made for sailing in the high seas”. The Lord invites us to “cross to the other side”, which is never easy and full of dangers. The good news is the Lord is crossing with us; in fact, He was the first to do so when He died on the Cross for all of us.

Amen