



ST. PATRICK'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

14794 Curtis Blvd Port St John Fl 32927

Trinity 16
October 2, 2022

✠ In The Name of The Father and of The Son and of The Holy Ghost. Amen.

The passage selected for the sermon is taken from the Gospel:

“When he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.”

St Luke vii 7-13

Before I get to the Gospel, I wanted to share my favorite portion of Psalm 107 because it pertains to the ordeal we have just encountered.

“They that go down to the sea in ships, * and occupy their business in great waters;

These men see the works of the LORD, * and his wonders in the deep.

For at his word the stormy wind ariseth, * which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep; * their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, * and are at their wit's end.

SO when they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, * he delivereth them out of their distress.

For he maketh the storm to cease, * so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad, because they are at rest; * and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be. O that men would therefore praise the LORD for his goodness; * and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!

That they would exalt him also in the congregation of the people, * and praise him in the seat of the elders!”

It is easy to understand how this passage is applicable to our recent experience. The whole State of Florida was very much like ship in a storm, tossed by winds and water, and in grave danger. I am sure we were all praying desperately to be delivered from the fury of Ian. Thankfully, God heard us, and His angels extended their wings around us, and we were delivered. Today we come to Church to give thanks for our deliverance and to praise His Name before the elders.

I am reminded of the gospel account of Apostles sailing across the Sea of Galilee on their way to meet Jesus. A great storm comes up and they are in fear that the boat will capsize and cost them their lives. Then, through the storm, they see Jesus coming to meet them, walking calmly on the water and commanding the wind and waves. St. Peter asks Jesus if he could also walk on the waters, and Jesus invites St. Peter out to join Him. As long as

St Peter is looking at Jesus, he can walk on the water confidently. When he looks away from Jesus and at the water, his fears return and he begins to sink. Jesus reaches out lift him back up, returns him to the boat, and joins them as they navigate the rest of the journey in safety and peace. The message is that we need to keep our eyes on Jesus, and not be overtaken by the storms of our lives. If we can do that, we also will be safely delivered.

The storms in our lives are not just literal catastrophes, such as hurricanes and flooding. We find ourselves in physical, financial, emotional, and even spiritual storms regularly. Certainly, the mother from Nain in this morning's Gospel was going through a terrible personal storm. Her only child had just died, and I am sure she was wracked with grief. In addition to the loss of her son, she had to anticipate that her own life would be considerably harder without him. As a woman in a male dominated culture, she could not own her own property. Whatever livelihood the son provided was also her shield against poverty and want. As she would emerge from her grieving, she would find herself in desperate straits. We can be sure she felt as tossed about and fearful as the sailors in the Psalm.

But, in the midst of her distress, Jesus was already on the way to relieve her, to redeem and deliver her and her son. It wasn't an accident that he happened to be at the gates of Nain at that moment. The deceased son had begun his journey through the gates of death to meet his judge and savior, and there was Jesus, right in front of the young man, as He will be when each of us make that journey.

He felt their grief of both the mother and son. He understood their distress. He calmed the storm that beset them. He restored the young man and returned him to His mother. He gave them peace and hope. He gave them life and love through His most gracious mercy.

St Luke recorded this miracle so that we too would know that Jesus will be there for us in the difficult storms of our lives. Whether it is distress over our finances, or getting through sickness and injury, navigating our broken relationships or inclination to self-destructive sin, Jesus will be there to calm our storm and bring us peace and hope.

Even in our most difficult times, when we face the prospect of our own mortality or the death of someone we love dearly, Jesus will be there to bring us to peace, to heal our grieving, and fill us with hope. He will likely not restore our loved ones to our arms for the temporary comfort of living together in this life. He will do for us a far greater miracle. He will restore us to everlasting life in His Love and light, and He will reunite us to our Father, and to all those we love who have gone before us or will follow after.

Wonderfully, he doesn't leave us to seek Him when the storm is at its worst. He is already on His way and seeking us before we even know we need Him. He finds us and comforts us in His Word and in His holy sacrament. He wants us to be able to enter these storms in the sure confidence of His love and protection and to deliver not only ourselves, but also those who depend upon us.

The storms of life will afflict us time and again, but the love of God and His mercy are constant. Jesus will be there for us not only every time we need Him, but for all of time.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen