

## **The Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

### **7 August 2011**

Last minute rescues are common in the movies. The heroine or hero come just in time to save someone from a predicament or death. These scenes from the movies borrow from real life events. Recently we heard the report of the rescue of a person in the Sauk River. Last year the world watched as the miners in Chile were rescued after months of being trapped in the mine. There are stories of a family member awaking others and getting them safely out of their burning home.

In the gospel today, we heard Jesus stretching out a hand and catching Peter as he was sinking. In the boat we can see Jesus smiling and giving Peter a hard time, why did you doubt, I told you to come, don't you trust me?

Each of us here has been rescued by God more than once. God's mercy has rescued us from our sinful ways. God has given us the courage to overcome our immobilizing fear. God has given us the courage to overcome an addictive behavior.

What strikes me in the gospel story today is that Jesus comes out to the disciples midst the storm. He does not calm the winds first and walk out to them but walks out to them in the storm. Jesus offers us his hand midst our struggles and says together we will overcome.

Through prayer and the sacraments God's hand is stretched out to us. The question is will we take the hand. It is not always easy to accept that hand because we ourselves are not ready to accept the path we are being called to. At times, the road to rescue will be painful and long, it is only in surrendering control to God, that we will come to a better spot. As in today's gospel, the winds die down and the boat is in calm waters.

The hand God stretches out to others is often through us. While we may have very good reasons for turning away from family and friends, or even enemies, whose weakness or perversity or idiocy has gotten them into trouble. It is not our position to judge, but rather to extend the love of God through our patience. Then we can become rescuers as we have been rescued.

In this meal, we celebrate our rescue. Jesus who died for us and through his resurrection opened to us the way of salvation. Through our sharing in this meal may we find the strength to accept the hand of God and in turn be that hand through which God touches the life of another. Are you ready to accept the invite of God's assistance?