

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (Mk 4,35-41): One day when evening had come, Jesus said to them, «Let's go across to the other side». So they left the crowd and took him away in the boat he had been sitting in, and other boats set out with him. Then a storm gathered and it began to blow a gale. The waves spilled over into the boat so that it was soon filled with water. And Jesus was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. They woke him up and said, «Master, don't you care if we sink?». As Jesus awoke, he rebuked the wind and ordered the sea, «Quiet now! Be still!». The wind dropped and there was a great calm. Then Jesus said to them, «Why are you so frightened? Do you still have no faith?». But they were terrified and they said to one another, «Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him!».

«Master, don't you care if we sink?»

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Today—in these days of «stormy weather»— we find the Gospel being held up to questioning. Humanity has gone through dramas which, like violent waves, have broken over individuals and entire peoples, particularly during the 20th century and the troubles of the 21st. Sometimes we can't help but ask «Master, don't you care if we sink?» (Mk 4,38); If You really do exist, if You are our Father, how can these things happen?

Before the horror of the memory of the concentration camps of the Second World War Pope Benedict asks «Where was God when this was happening, Why did He stay silent? How could He tolerate such excessive destruction?». It was a question that the people of Israel asked in the Old Testament: «Why are you asleep? (...) Why do you hide your face from us and forget about our plight?».

God will not answer those questions: of him we can ask everything except why; we have no right to demand explanations. In fact, God is there and is talking; the

problem is us, because we do not put ourselves in his presence and therefore cannot hear his voice. «We cannot decipher God's secret —says Pope Benedict XI—. We can only see fragments of it and are in the wrong if what we are trying is to become judges of God and History. As such we would not be defending humanity, but rather would be contributing to its destruction».

Therefore, the problem is not whether God exists or is here with us or not. The problem is that we live as if He didn't exist. Here is God's answer: «Why are you so afraid? How can you not have faith?» (Mc 4,40). This Jesus said that to His disciples; He also said it to Saint Faustina Kowalska: «My daughter, do not be afraid, I am always with you even when it looks as though I am not».

Let us not ask him questions, but rather let us pray and accept His will and... then there will be less dramas, and, amazed, we will say «Who is he whom even the wind and the sea obey him?» (Mc 4,41) —Jesus, I put all my trust in you!