Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (*Mk* 4:35-41): On that day, as evening drew on, Jesus said to his disciples: “Let us cross to the other side.” Leaving the crowd, they took Jesus with them in the boat just as he was. And other boats were with him. A violent squall came up and waves were breaking over the boat, so that 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?” He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Quiet! Be still!” The wind ceased and there was great calm. Then he asked them, “Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?” They were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?”

“Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

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Today —in these times of “severe storms”—we find ourselves challenged by the Gospel. Humanity has lived through tragedies that, like violent waves, have burst upon entire men and peoples, particularly during the 20th century and the dawn of the 21st. And sometimes we impulsively ask him: "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" (Mk 4,38); If You truly exist, if You are Father, why do these events occur?

Faced with the memory of the horrors of the concentration camps of World War II, Pope Benedict asked himself: “Where was God in those days? Why was he silent? How could he permit this endless slaughter?” A question that Israel, already in the Old Testament, asked itself: “Why do you sleep? … Why do you hide your face; why forget our pain and misery?” (Ps 44:24-25).

God will not answer these questions: we can ask Him for everything except the reason for things; we have no right to hold him accountable. In fact, God is present and is speaking. It is we who are not [in his presence] and therefore do not hear his voice. Benedict XVI said: “We cannot peer into God’s mysterious plan - we see only piecemeal, and we would be wrong to set ourselves up as judges of God and history. Then we would not be defending man, but only contributing to his downfall."

In fact, the problem is not that God does not exist or that he is not here, but that we men live as if God does not exist. Here is God's answer: "Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?" (Mk 4:40). This is what Jesus said to the Apostles, and he said the same thing to St. Faustina Kowalska: "My daughter, fear

nothing. I am always with you, even if it seems to you that I am not."

Let us not question him, rather let us pray and respect his will and... then there will be fewer dramas... and, astonished, we will exclaim: "Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?" (Mk 4:41). —Jesus, I trust in you!

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “During times of turmoil, do not let yourselves be overcome by the waves. However, if the wind blows and the passions of our soul are stirred up, let us not despair: let us awaken Christ, so that we may sail smoothly and arrive at the harbor of our homeland” (Saint Augustine)

- “When Jesus climbs into that boat again, the weather suddenly changes: they all feel united in their faith in Him. Faith gives us the certainty of Jesus’ presence always beside us, of his hand which grasps us to pull us back from danger” (Francis)

- “Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same path if she is to communicate the fruits of salvation to men." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nº 853)