

Sermon Guide – March 21, 2021 – 5th Sunday of Lent

This story of Jesus calming a storm appears in three of the four gospels. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called “synoptic” gospels which means they describe events of Jesus ministry from a similar point of view in contrast to the Gospel of John. Accounts of events and parables are often found in more than one of the first three gospels.

Today we read from Mark 4:35-41. The same story is also found in Matthew 8:18-27 and Luke 8:22-25. You may find it interesting to compare and contrast the three. What details are similar? How are they different? What impact do the differences have on the meaning of the story?

The disciples were scared to death of the wind and the waves of the storm. But while they were scared, Jesus was asleep on a pillow! How could he sleep through the storm? That’s what the disciples wondered. “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re drowning?” Of course, Jesus cared. But, the disciples accuse Jesus of not caring.

Sometimes people think that God doesn’t care about them, especially when they are in the middle of messes. Or they look at the messes in the world and wonder where God is or why God doesn’t do something to fix it. What would you say to someone who feels that way? Have you ever wondered if God really cares?

Jesus stops the storm with three words: “Quiet! Be still!” After the wind and waves calmed down, Jesus addressed the question of the disciples’ fear and their lack of faith. Why is Jesus concerned about their fear and their faith?

How do you feel about storms? Have you experienced a major storm like a tornado or severe thunderstorm? Have you been on a boat during a storm? Can you understand why the disciples were scared? What was Jesus’ point in questioning their faith?

The disciples had experienced Jesus’ miracles connected with healing sick people and casting out demons. But, having control over cosmic forces was something entirely different. “Even the wind and the sea obey him!” “Who is this?” they ask. They are beginning to realize how very special Jesus is. Of course, we KNOW how special Jesus is because we have the benefit of knowing the rest of the story. We know about the Resurrection!