

**Fr. Nick Dant's Homily, Saint Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis
Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Aug. 8-9, 2020, Cycle A**

Do you ever have the fear of feeling lost and not knowing which way to turn? Do you sometimes feel hopeless and all your efforts are for naught? Does life feel so overwhelming sometimes, that you feel like you're drowning? With the economic collapse happening and the job market constantly shrinking, and wondering if my job will be cut next, with our globe being inundated with wars and conflicts that seems insolvable, with the threat of devastating disease, such as the Coronavirus and Covid -19 always seemingly at someone's doorstep, the feeling of being in a swirling storm with no hope of escape is touching most of us.

The Prophet Elijah, for example; Elijah had fled to Mt. Horeb to escape the violent wrath of Queen Jezebel. Jezebel was King Ahab's wife and was the real power behind the throne of northern Kingdom of Israel; all in that kingdom knew who really to fear! Being the power behind the throne, Jezebel had convinced her husband, Ahab, to erect statues of the pagan god Ba'al in the Temple. As God's Prophet, Elijah fearlessly preached the Word of God, calling people to repent or else there would be a drought. When Elijah's words fell on deaf ears and hardened hearts, there was no rain to quench people's thirst or to water the parched fields. To add insult to injury, Elijah then defeated the Prophets of Ba'al, by slaying all 400 of them, that Jezebel had sent to triumph over him. Jezebel was furious and sent her troops to have Elijah put to death. So Elijah flees for his life, hiding out on Mt. Horeb, Mount Sinai. He felt such despair, that he asked God to take his life – he just couldn't put up with being God's prophet any longer. Elijah wonders where he can find peace and solace. So, on Mt. Horeb on Mt. Sinai, God shows Elijah, He (God) is the source of peace, of calm and even rescue. Elijah may find himself experiencing trials in his life that are like a strong mighty wind, a raging fire, or even a violent earthquake, but Elijah discovers that placing his trust in God, God will bring him the soothing solace like a tiny spring breeze!

Peter and the disciples found themselves tossed about in their boat on a stormy sea! They learn the same lesson Elijah does. Jesus challenges Peter to come out onto the stormy sea with him, but Peter becomes overwhelmed, he panics and cries out "Lord, save me." The good news is that Peter discovers Jesus is there in the midst of the storm, and Jesus stretches out his arm to save him, even as Jesus berates Peter: Why did you doubt? Why Peter did you let go of the "little faith" you had? The point is that Peter did have faith, and he discovered that even with "little faith" he could weather the storm because of Jesus. And we were told: that once Peter and Jesus got back into the boat, the wind died down. With Jesus, we discover that the storm can be tamed.

What is true for Elijah, and true for Peter and the disciples, is true for us. As followers of Jesus, Jesus does not promise to take the storms of our lives away; but if we place our trust in God and Jesus, we will be able to weather the storms of life and experience that calm and peace of God that will sustain us.