

Concordia Lutheran Conference

Daily Devotions

for the

Week of the 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

– Sunday –

Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. – Matthew 14:27.

When our Savior had miraculously fed the five thousand, He straightway constrained His disciples to get into a boat, and to go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. He went up into the mountain apart to pray. When the evening was come, He was there alone. But the boat was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying: *“It is a spirit.”* And they cried out with fear. But straightway Jesus spoke unto them, saying: *“Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.”* And Peter answered Him and said: *“Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.”* And He said: *“Come.”* And when Peter was come out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried, saying: *“Lord, save me!”* And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him: *“O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?”* And when they were come into the boat, the wind ceased (Matthew 14:22-32). Indeed, Jesus is, in truth, the Son of God, the Only-Begotten Son of the Father. His divine eye sees when His own are in trouble. He hastens to help them. But when He comes, how often have **we** not recognized His hand at work in **our** lives, nor have **we** recognized His wondrous ways? Instead, how often have **we** been upset and fearful? When we are upset and fearful, how we need to listen to and drink in the comfort of Jesus’ words: *“Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.”* Because of this Savior and His *“ransom for all”* (I Timothy 2:6), paid to His heavenly Father as *“the propitiation [the full payment to God] for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world”* (I John 2:2), God has freely *“justified”* (Romans 3:24) *“all [who] have sinned and come short of the glory of God”* (v. 23), *“not imputing their trespasses unto them”* (II Corinthians 5:19b). On account of these good tidings of great joy for all sinners (Luke 2:10), Jesus can declare: *“Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.”* The Savior wants all to believe this Gospel of *“good cheer;”* He does not want anyone to be afraid of the curse and condemnation of God’s Law, that curse and condemnation which they justly deserve for their sins. We are not to be of *“little faith”* and *“doubt”* God’s never-changing *“mercies”* (Lamentations 3:22; Romans 12:1a) in Jesus’ perfect obedience and His sinless suffering and death to turn away God’s wrath toward the world of sinners. So, poor, unworthy, and undeserving sinner, because of God’s *“grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 3:24b), *“be of good cheer”* (Matthew 14:27b); your *“sins”* are *“forgiven”* (9:2c). Now go, and *“live”* more and more for Him who *“died for [you] and rose again”* (II Corinthians 5:15b).

PRAYER – Jesus Christ, great and faithful Lord and Savior, I am a poor, sinful human being, often weak in faith, at times afraid, easily perplexed. Have patience with me. *“Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free Spirit”* (Psalm 51:11-12). Do not leave me nor forsake me. For Thy name’s sake, my good Shepherd, continue to lead me with the truths of Thy precious Word and, through that Word of grace, keep me Thy believing child until I am with Thee in paradise. Amen.

Jesus, my Truth, my Way, my sure unerring Light; on Thee my feeble soul I stay, which Thou wilt lead aright.

My Wisdom and my Guide, my Counselor Thou art; O let me never leave Thy side, nor from Thy paths depart.

Thou seest my feebleness; Jesus, be Thou my Power; my Help and Refuge in distress, my Fortress and my Tower.

Myself I cannot save; myself I cannot keep; but strength in Thee I surely have, whose eyelids never sleep.

My soul to Thee alone; now, therefore, I commend; Thou, Jesus, having loved Thine own, wilt love me to the end!

Hymn 433, stanzas 1-3, 5-6 (TLH)

Scripture Reading: Romans 12:6-16; John 2:1-11