



## Wednesday Prayer

11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – The Storms of Faith

**“Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water... toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him.**

**“You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”**

**Matthew 14:29-31**

It's a familiar story, one people who walk with Jesus know by heart. Jesus had a busy day preaching. And when he was done, he sent the disciples on ahead in the boat while he withdrew alone up a mountain to refresh himself and pray. He stayed there until dawn was approaching, and then he came down the mountain. He saw that the boat was some distance away, and the waves were very high, so he began walking on the water toward the boat. The men thought it was a ghost, but Jesus said, “Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.” Peter thought it would be a great idea to walk on the water to meet Jesus, so of course, he said, “If it is you, tell me to come to you on the water.” Jesus said, “Come,” and Peter did indeed walk on the water...until he regarded his surroundings and freaked out. Jesus was quick to catch Peter before he drowned, and he admonished Peter for his lack of faith.

So what has this passage got to do with the sex trafficking of youth? What I see here is a disciple (Peter) who is afraid of the storm sloshing the boat around like a bathtub rubber duck. When he sees Jesus (the Incarnate God) coming towards them, walking on the water, it seems impossible to Peter that this is happening. Jesus is breaking lots of rules of logic and physics: a man simply can't just step out from the shore *on top of the water!* But there he is, walking toward them. Jesus wants to share his confidence with these men who have chosen to follow him, so he invites Peter to be part of this experience called *faith*.

Sharing our faith journey with youth who have been trafficked may seem an impossible task. The story of Jesus walking on water is about as believable as stepping out onto a northern Minnesota lake in a severe thunderstorm and walking on the water. “How can I believe in a God who would allow me to be abused by these traffickers, and now you want me to believe this same God loves me, and wants to heal me, and life will suddenly be great?” Our job is to continue witnessing to youth and to show them how God works through us. It may feel like a longshot, but we might step out onto a little metaphorical lake and be seen and heard and believed simply by what we are doing every day: walking with God, one tiny step at a time.

**Lord of All Nature, help all exploited and trafficked youth know that You can be trusted to calm the waves and heal their deepest wounds. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

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