

# BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

June 23, 2024 • 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Mark 4:35-41

## Calming the Storm

*Jesus and his disciples decide to cross the sea in order to get away from the crowds, and Jesus takes this opportunity to get some rest. A violent storm erupts, and the disciples panic. Afraid they are about to perish, they wake Jesus from sleep. Jesus calms the squall.*

No matter what the season or time of year, whenever I read the Gospel of Jesus calming the storm, I remember the Christmas blizzard of 1983. It was snowing lightly when we left Ohio for Chicago, but by the time we reached Indiana the flurries had turned into a freezing whiteout. We were somewhere on Interstate 65 when the van began to sputter and stall. Every story I heard of people freezing to death came back to me.

We eased into the emergency lane and discovered there was an exit only a mile ahead. We prayed our way to the gas station that was actually open on Christmas Eve. We waited at the diner next door and learned that the state police had just closed the Interstate at the next exit. We quickly reserved a room at the closest motel. When the car was fixed, we took off again in the storm.

Once settled in our room, Roger and I headed for the lobby to get news of the storm. Everything we heard was disheartening: Roads were closed until the next day, and there was little food in the small, attached restaurant. In surprisingly good spirits, the folks who were gathered began sharing the edibles they had with them. Oranges, cheese, bread and other holiday goodies were quickly divided up.

Back in our room, we ate our food next to a crayed Christmas tree the children had drawn and decorated while we were gone. Before we went to sleep, Roger read the Christmas story from the Gideon Bible and we broke and shared the last piece of bread. By the next afternoon the roads were open and we could leave for my dad's.

I can empathize with the apostles as they feared for their lives in the tempest. I can also proclaim the wonder of Jesus knowing that there is more than one way he can calm a storm.

### FAMILY RESPONSE

Ask everyone to talk about their favorite Christmas memory or tradition.

### PERSONAL RESPONSE

What is the best thing about Christmas for you? How can you make that happen at other times of the year or during the storms of your life? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?