

12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B
Job 38:1, 8-11
Psalm 107:23-24, 25-26, 28-29, 30-31
2 Corinthians 5:14-17
Mark 4:35-41
June 21, 2015
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I remember, as a child, curling up, half asleep, in the back seat of our family car, surrounded by my brothers and sisters, as my father drove through the night on some family journey. Lulled by the drone of the engine, hypnotized by the lights of passing cars, and comforted by the murmur of my parents' conversation, I felt a profound peace, and wished that the journey would never end. I was serenely confident of my father's infallibility as a driver. No amount of rain, fog, snow or ice could raise a qualm in my mind. We were all together, and we were all safe. Never since have I felt so secure.

One of the most anxious times of my life also involved driving. This time I was behind the wheel. I was an undergraduate, making the thousand-mile journey home, from college, for Christmas. I had two passengers. One of them was Sylvia, my roommate's fiancée. Our custom was to drive straight through from Indiana to Boston, completing the trip in eighteen or twenty hours. It was the middle of the night, and the Pennsylvania Turnpike was covered with an invisible sheet of ice. There was nothing for miles except rolling hills covered with white snow and black trees. My nerves were on edge as I struggled to keep the slow-moving car on the icy road. And every time the car slipped even slightly, Sylvia, sitting directly behind me, would scream, "Oh no, we're going to

die." Now Sylvia's estimate of my abilities as a driver may have been perfectly accurate, but her reaction wasn't helpful.

In our Gospel, Jesus and his disciples are crossing the Sea of Galilee in a fishing boat. A squall blows up, and the boat begins to ship water. Now with Jesus right there in the boat with them, you might expect the disciples to face the storm with child-like confidence in their master. Surely, they were safe enough with the messiah right on board. But in the event, the disciples react more like Sylvia. They're terrified that they will drown. They wake Jesus, who calms the wind and the sea, and takes them to task for their lack of faith.

Each of us is on a journey -- a life-long journey to God. In the course of that journey, along with times of happiness and peace, we will all experience moments of disappointment, tragedy and heartache. Like Job, we won't be able to explain the bad times away. Most times our suffering just won't make sense. The question we must ask ourselves is how will we react? Will we give in to panic and despair, or will we retain our trust in our Lord's loving plan for us?

The answer depends on whether we've invited Jesus on board for our journey through life. If he is with us, in the Eucharist, in his Word, in prayer, in our fellow Christians, then our faith, our trust, will endure. And when the storm passes, we will find life, peace and love that are everlasting.