

Daily Homily
The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church,
Optional Memorial
13 Week in Ordinary Time
[30 June 2020](#)

I have been on boats and ships a handful of times. I can understand why some people develop a phobia of the water. It is a force and a power that has a mind of its own. Out on the open ocean, there is always this feeling that one can only be in control up to a point, the rest is up to the temperament of the waters.

The temperament of the waters... that seems to be where we are as a nation these days. Tempers flaring, anger driving, rioting happening, unrest lurking. We have been cooped up for three months. We have been told to stay home, work from home. Now we reopen – sort of. We are told to wear masks and to keep our distance. In addition to this, racial riots break out. Police tactics are called into question. It filters into the injustice shown to the different nationalities and races of our country. One race has dominated over another race. Is the solution to replace that dominate race with another? Is the solution to dominate at all or to live together in the calm of peace? While business have been shut down, some to never open again, and some on the brink of closing forever, in this time of reopening they have been looted amidst rioting. Is this the solution? And now statues of historical figures who have been found wanting, are defaced and destroyed all together – including a Catholic saint – St. Junipero Serra, a missionary of California. His statue pulled down to the ground and spray painted red. At least the media clip that I saw and the impression that the media wanted to give at the time seemed to indicate, that all the onlookers stood without emotion or reaction. They all stood to the side and looked on passively. We are definitely in a storm, incensed by the sands of the Sahara now. What more is coming as we are tossed on the temperament of so many? With each crashing wave there is a sense of “what can we do?,” there is a sense of uncertainty, being overwhelmed, and being afraid for our present condition and the condition of our future. Where are these temperamental tides taking us?

The Gospel today is necessary. The imagery for today is perfect. Jesus is in a boat with his disciples. He fell asleep. One can only fall into a deep sleep in a moving vehicle if one is totally confident in the driver. Jesus is in a boat with fisherman. He is very confident of their skill and their ability to drive the boat. This particular storm, must have been bad if these lifelong fisherman are terrified by waves that are swamping them. These fisherman turn to this wandering preacher for help. What a scene! Jesus is calm. Jesus is cool. Jesus is collected. He even wants to have a discussion with them as he asks them, “Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?” The Lord rebukes both the wind and the sea. He rebukes what is above and below. He rebukes what is at the surface of the storm and all the intricacies of the inner, sometimes unknown and diabolical workings, of the storm.

Do you feel like you have emerged from being shut down and quarantined and are now in this boat riding the swamping waves and waters and blowing winds of some angry storm? Be with Jesus. Pray with Jesus. He is not asleep. Let him rebuke your little faith. Then let him rebuke your fears – their surface tension and the tension that goes deep down. Learn how he rebukes, take it all in, savor the words he uses, the authority and confidence with which he does it, for that power over wind and sea is also given to us. We too may have to stand up for more than just statues of our saints falling. We too may have to learn the power of rebuking and the power of calming.

Do not be afraid though. Pope Saint John Paul II said that all the solutions to the problems of the world can be found in the Mass, can be found in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is Jesus getting into our boat.