

## Nineteenth Sunday Year A. 13<sup>th</sup> August 2023. Take courage, Be not afraid!

Looking at how the world is becoming so complicated, the existential reality of death, sickness, hunger and difficulty caused by our leaders, like the disciples we are likely to be afraid. Having been given thorough medical attention for many years, we still lose our loved ones, with the advancement of technology and communication supported with sophisticated security cameras, the rate of crime is increasingly alarming. Insecurity is prevalent in almost every part of the world, and hunger is gradually becoming a norm. According to a Philosopher by name Plato, that leadership is a duty of philosopher's kings who acquire the techniques and skills for the art of ruling. I quite agreed with his theory, but on the contrary, with several scholars in the world, we still do not have good leaders.

In a situation like ours, we are bound to complain, make excuses and be terrified, especially when those who are supposed to protect us are the once igniting or causing problems in the world.

In our first reading the God of Old Testament manifest himself to Elijah as a symbol of redemption, and in the gospel, Jesus reveal himself as one who came to calm our fears.

God promise to meet Elijah in the cosmic forms. The three different experiences of strong wind, earthquakes and fire were signs of distraction we often encounter in the world, they appear so magnificent to attract more people, and the moment we pay our attention to these, they will only destroy us.

The sign which was a tiny whispering sound was the one which God was present. In a nutshell, not everything that looks attractive is beautiful or beneficial to us. A tiny voice which does not look attractive becomes Elijah's saving grace. Peter in the gospel reading, having doubted the authenticity of the gentle voice which says ***"Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."*** He said command me to come on the water if it is you, Lord. Jesus who doesn't denied us what we ask, commanded Peter to come and meet him. Peter began well by walking also on water but alone the way, he focuses on the strong wind, and he became frightened and begins to sink. The problem with Peter was his inability to look at Jesus, instead he was concern about the wind. In our journey of life, we sometimes concentrate on our problems and forget about the solution who is Jesus. Remember we are children of God, and if God is our Father, we should fair no evil, not even the wind and storms of life. They are part of our journey, that was why Elijah the prophet experienced it and the disciples of Jesus.

The most important thing about Peter, was the fact that when he didn't fine favor elsewhere, he quickly returned to Jesus and cry out, ***"Lord save me."*** Jesus came to his rescued. How often do we returned to Jesus when we face challenges, when our children become the source of our frustration, when we find it so difficult to forgive, when the doctor told me that my sickness has deadline, when we face any financial constraints? Like St. Paul in our second reading, when we are in great sorrow and constant anguish in our hearts? Let us not be afraid but returned to Jesus like Peter and say, "Lord save me." or like the psalmist "Lord, let us see your kindness and grant us your salvation.

Peace, Fr. Jingbe Simon