



12th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Job 38:1, 8-11
Ps 107:23-26, 28-31
2 Cor 5:14-17
Mark 4:35-41

Monday June 22

Gen 12:1-9
Ps 33:12-13, 18-20, 22
Matt 7:1-5

Tuesday June 23

Gen 13:2, 5-18
Ps 15:1-5
Matt 7:6, 12-14

Wednesday June 24 Birth of John the Baptist

Isaiah 49:1-6
Ps 139:1b-3, 13-15
Acts 13:22-26
Luke 1:57-66, 80

Thursday June 25

Gen 16:1-12, 15-16
Ps 106:1b-5
Matt 7:21-29

Friday June 26

Gen 17:1, 9-10, 15-22
Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5
Matt 8:1-4

Saturday June 27

Gen 8:1-15
Lk 1:46-50, 53-55
Matt 8:5-17

It's hurricane season where I live in Florida. Some people think that destructive storms are punishments from God.

While it is true that people deserve to be punished for their immorality, Jesus took the Father's righteous wrath upon his own body, accepting more shedding blood on the cross so that all sinners could be saved from the justice we deserve.

Jesus wants to calm our storms, not cause them.

Hardships are not punishments. They are the best occasions for growing closer to God. All of us have seasons of storms in our lives. Each of them are invitations to realize that Jesus is walking with us through it all, whether we deserve his help or not. They're opportunities to learn more knowledge, gain more wisdom, and grow stronger in true faith. It's a time of be-

coming more humble. Because of our increased need to rely on God, we discover more about his love, but only if we stop insisting that God should behave like a magic genie that we control to resolve our problems the way we think it should happen.

Some of the storms in this world continue raging because we don't do enough to bring the presence of Christ into them. After we've gained from our experiences, we're supposed to help others endure the storms of their lives. We have the earthly hands that

Jesus wants to use to calm their storms. And then, surprise! It is in this outreach that we realize that our sufferings have not been in vane; this calms our stormy clouds of despair and regret.



Often, we create storms by making sinful decisions, but God doesn't want us to get punished. He sends plenty of red-flag warnings and then, if we get into a hurricane anyway, Jesus invites us to calm the turmoil by reconciling with him.

Whether the storms brew by sin or by nature, if we cry out like the disciples in Sunday's Gospel reading — "Lord, don't you care that we're perishing?" — Jesus replies, "Why are you scared? How little faith you have! My peace is already here."

Reflect & Discuss:

1. What's stormy in your life right now? From where did this turmoil come?
2. What do you need Jesus to save you from today? Choose an action that extends trust to him. What will you do this week to quiet yourself and find the peaceful presence of Christ?
3. How has Jesus calmed the waves or led you to a peaceful shore when you suffered through a stormy time in your life?
4. When did you recognize his presence beside you? What happened that revealed his helpfulness?