



**This week meditations on liturgical texts
from **Skynia Magazine****

May 9 - 15
The Julian calendar

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Stages of meditation

Please find below some schematic prompts for each stage of the meditation on the Word of God. [Read more.](#)

1. Reading

- Read the text
- What does it tell by itself?
- Clear up the context
- Look up the comments
- Find the key-phrase

2. Meditation

- What is my here and now?
- What does the Word tell me?
- Use your imagination
- "Digest" the text
- The Word and my life

3. Prayer

- What will I say in response?
- Recognition and request
- Gratitude and glorifying
- Prayer in the Word
- My participation in the Divine Liturgy

4. Contemplation

- A call to conversion
- Now I am silent
- Staying in the presence of God
- Now He is guiding me

Biblical readings and meditations

May 9

Thomas Sunday

Acts 5: 12-20

John 20: 19-31

- [Reading](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

Acts 5: 12-20

Now many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem. Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by. A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.

Then the high priest took action; he and all who were with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), being filled with jealousy, arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, brought them out, and said, "Go, stand in the temple and tell the people the whole message about this life."

John 20: 19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you

may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Meditation

Jesus appears to the disciples. His mission didn't end with His death and resurrection. Again He is with His disciples. Jesus stands among them, greets them, shows them His wounds so that they can believe that indeed He is there; He wants them not to be afraid any more. He brings them His peace. The time of fear, uncertainty and misunderstanding is over. Jesus has gained peace by reconciling heaven and earth, God and men. Jesus has paid the price for sin and has overcome death. What kept humanity in fear has been defeated. After death there will be resurrection, Jesus has proved it to be true: behold, He is risen with them.

Jesus gives His disciples the Holy Spirit, the Comforter and Teacher, the Helper in prayer and service. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit descended only on chosen people, prophets, and kings. And thanks to Jesus, He became a gift to every believer.

Jesus wasn't disappointed about Thomas not believing. He did not take offense at him. He came again to convince him. Came with peace. He invited Thomas to touch His wounds and check that they were real, so that he would believe. Jesus never neglects an occasion to convert the man. On the contrary, He creates opportunities to help a person believe and be converted. God never tempts the man or does evil. He is holy and perfect; He is an absolute good. Sin and evil don't prevent Him from approaching the sinner and cannot diminish His love.

His mission didn't end with His death, resurrection and ascension. He continues to come to His disciples. He is waiting for them in temples and chapels to feed them with the Word of God and His Body and Blood. He is looking for them from the confessionals, ready to cleanse from sins. He is knocking at the door of their heart and inviting to spend time together in prayer. We can see and hear Him, feel His presence, help and support; we can touch His wounds. We can receive peace from Him, rely on Him and not be afraid. We can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that having life in His name means having the eternal life after the resurrection of the dead.

May 10

Monday

Acts 3: 19-26

John 2: 1-11

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- [Meditation](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Contemplation](#)

Acts 3: 19-26

Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah appointed for you, that is, Jesus, who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets. Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you. And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people.' And all the prophets, as many as have spoken, from Samuel and those after him, also predicted these days. You are the descendants of the prophets and of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, 'And in your descendants all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you, to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

John 2: 1-11

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of

Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Meditation

The disciples went together with Jesus to a wedding in Cana of Galilee and saw Him do a great miracle – change the water into wine. Jesus showed His mightiness – and the disciples believed in Him. Probably, they tasted the wine *made by Jesus* and paid attention to the fact that it was much better than the wine made by people. When the Lord does a miracle, He does it well. He does not do it carelessly. God does not create bad things. His intentions and plans are impeccable. His motif is love for us. And though it is impossible to understand God's will, but one may trust that God does not send any bad things, does not do harm to anyone, does not want us to suffer. He is always ready to support us and help us.

The fact that God created me as a woman is not His mistake. That's what He wanted to do, that's His decision. All the talents, abilities, resources I have are the ones He decided to give me. My limitations, lack of abilities, opportunities, resources I would like to have but don't have also correspond to His will. I may be looking for justice, complain, or grumble since I have less than others, but that will not lead me to happiness. Since human life and happiness depend not on what a person has, what (s)he can do, what (s)he has achieved, but on God. The most precious treasures, the best riches: to cognize God, to communicate with Him through prayers, inner peace, joy, God's love and mercy – are available for everyone, the Lord offers them, gives them free of charge. Either God's love, or forgiveness of sins, or salvation, or a place in the Heavenly Kingdom cannot be earned, they can only be accepted. God is always ready to supplement my weakness with His might. He knows about everything I lack and I am striving for, and He can give them to me if He wants. I just have to ask – with faith and trust in His will.

The merciful, loving and generous God who is not limited either by time or space, the All-Mighty and the Wise, does not give bad gifts.

May 11

Tuesday

Acts 4: 1-10

John 3: 16-21

- [Reading](#)
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Acts 4: 1-10

While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, much annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead. So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. But many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand.

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.

John 3: 16-21

And the Lord said:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

Meditation

Evil deserves condemnation. Every sin must be condemned. There is no person who would live in the world and not sin. If the Lord wanted to judge the world justly, all people would be condemned. Depending on the severity of the sins, the punishment could be different, but surely no one would be justified. God the Father sent the Son into the world not to condemn the world, but to save.

The Lord chooses not to condemn people, but to save them. God does not want the sinner to die, but hopes for his repentance. He is willing to help him get rid of his sins and be converted.

Salvation is God's offer to man. It is attained by faith. Everyone who believes in Jesus receives salvation and eternal life. There is no such a sin that the Lord is not ready to forgive a repentant sinner. There is no such an obstacle that can separate man from God. There is no such a sinner on earth who cannot be converted. Salvation is available to everyone. The bandit crucified on the cross met Jesus, - crucified, tortured and dying, - but was able to recognize the Savior in Him. In the last minutes of his life, he believed, was converted, and received the promise of the kingdom of heaven.

The light has come into the world. He who seeks the truth goes to the light. He who desires good is not afraid of light. In the light of Christ, man can see the truth about himself, about his weakness and sinfulness, about his limitations and inability to resist temptations and trials on his own. But this truth does not disappoint, but points to a strong and holy, boundless and all mighty God Who is benevolent and ready to help, Who goes out to meet and does everything necessary to bridge the gap between Himself and man, Who invites to communication and cooperation.

In God's light you can see the true beauty of each person, recognize the value of his/her life and immortal soul, be filled with kindness and love for neighbor. Whoever chooses the light can every day meet Jesus in a prayer and recognize His acts in human acts, events and circumstances.

May 12

Wednesday

Acts 4: 13-22

John 5: 17-24

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Acts 4: 13-22

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus. When they saw the man who had been cured standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. So they ordered them to leave the council while they discussed the matter with one another. They said, "What will we do with them? For it is obvious to all who live in Jerusalem that a notable sign has been done through them; we cannot deny it. But to keep it from spreading further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name." So they called them and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard." After threatening them again, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people, for all of them praised God for what had happened. For the man on whom this sign of healing had been performed was more than forty years old.

John 5: 17-24

But Jesus answered them, “My Father is still working, and I also am working.” For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing; and he will show him greater works than these, so that you will be astonished. Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes. The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son, so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Meditation

There are some names that stick in human memory for quite a time. Some are used to curse, scare, or they are hated like Herod, Caligula, Stalin, Hitler. Some are recalled with gratitude and astonishment: Prometheus, Prince Volodymyr, Columbus, John Paul II. Some evoke an ambiguous attitude, controversies, are glorified by some people and condemned by others – Yarema Vyshnevetskyi (Wiśniowiecki), Ivan Mazepa, Stepan Bandera.

Names, names, names... They contain the letters of all alphabets, all sounds of all languages. Name belongs to the fundamental, first notions. There is not a single nation or tribe that is so much undeveloped that does not use names. We even start learning a foreign language with an almost sacramental phrase: *My name is...*

Since names helps identify an object, a phenomenon, a person, express and describe their essence, in the ancient times people believed that the name has the human soul inside it, and changing the name the person changes himself/herself, his/her life. That is why somewhere deep in the privacy of our thoughts our own name constitutes the first and the deepest level of self-identification, containing the most intimate information about us. The noblest deeds and the most atrocious crimes in history have always been committed *in the name of somebody or something*.

However, there is a name that stands out in the background of other names, surpassing them all. Since that Name belongs to God Himself, without whom there would be no other name, yours and mine. Jesus. In translation it runs as the saving God. *There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12)*. Can you tell with all confidence that you know it? That you do everything in this Name, that you live your life for this Name's sake, that you lay all your hopes on this Name?

God knows your name, and that means that He knows you. Fully, to the very depth. Your dreams and hopes, your dark sides and your night dreams. He is waiting for your signature in the book of salvation: *Rejoice that your names are written in heaven (Luke*

10:20). Moreover, He will never forget about you: *Even these may forget yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands* (Isaiah 49:15-16). Can you imagine that? God has your name inscribed on both palms of His hands!

And where have you inscribed His name, where do you wear it every day? What role in your life have you allocated to the Name of Jesus?

May 13

Thursday

St Apostle James

Acts 12: 1-11

Luke 5: 1-11

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Acts 12: 1-11

About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. After he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. (This was during the festival of Unleavened Bread.) When he had seized him, he put him in prison and handed him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover. While Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.

The very night before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his wrists. The angel said to him, "Fasten your belt and put on your sandals." He did so. Then he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me." Peter went out and followed him; he did not realize that what was happening with the angel's help was real; he thought he was seeing a vision. After they had passed the first and the second guard, they came before the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went outside and walked along a lane, when suddenly the angel left him. Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hands of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

Luke 5: 1-11

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught

nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

Meditation

Simon answered: Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.” When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. (...) When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

This passage is called *The calling of the first disciples*. It’s interesting how Jesus behaves: He enters the boat of Simon (Peter) and speaks to the people. And then, as if the people are gone, He tells the owner of the boat to put out into the deep water to catch fish. Simon goes against the fishing tradition: he says that at night they caught nothing, but only because Jesus says so, he is ready to let down his nets again. And this is where the adventure begins: two boats full of fish and three surprised fishermen who will become first three apostles.

What strikes me here:

- The way Jesus behaves. He enters the boat without asking. He chooses the boat of the one to whom He will once entrust His Church. He speaks in such a way that you want to believe His every word, even if what He says contradicts logic.
- Jesus sees the people in general, but also everyone in particular. He sees the sadness of Peter because they have caught nothing, and satisfies his need.
- His personality strikes the other two companions of Simon. Only one is called, but the others also want to follow.
- The attitude of Simon, James and John: having a boat full of fish, they leave it to get a heart full of love.

Where am I in this reading? Among the people who only listen passively, or among those who let Jesus into their boat? Am I ready to do what God says, despite all the defeats, failures and empty nets? Does my relationship with God captivate others? Am I able to show this friendship with God in my life?

Lord, when my nets are empty, I can stop believing in myself. Or in You. When my heart is empty, I stop believing in love. Only You can fill my nets, my heart and my life with Your generous love. And then I will have a choice: to choose You or what You give.

The disciples, having two boats full of fish that could become a wallet full of gold coins, choose You. And when You fill my life with success, joy and gifts, I forget that they come from Your hand. Teach me to value You first, to cultivate a relationship with You, and let

everything else be secondary. Thank you for calling me to follow You!

May 14

Friday

Acts 5: 1-11

John 5: 30-6: 2

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Acts 5: 1-11

But a man named Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property; with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some of the proceeds, and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet. "Ananias," Peter asked, "why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us but to God!" Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard of it. The young men came and wrapped up his body, then carried him out and buried him.

After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you and

your husband sold the land for such and such a price.” And she said, “Yes, that was the price.” Then Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear seized the whole church and all who heard of these things.

John 5: 30-6: 2

And the Lord said:

“I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

“If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. There is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that his testimony to me is true. You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth. Not that I accept such human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. But I have a testimony greater than John’s. The works that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his form, and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent.

“You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. I do not accept glory from human beings. But I know that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?”

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick.

Meditation

Jesus does not do anything on His own. Being God, impeccable and holy, he chooses obedience. He does not consider obedience to the Father to be any humiliation, He trusts Him, is not looking for His will and does not consider this as a loss.

Jesus does not testify about Himself, does not try to vindicate Himself and does not try to convince His opponents. He does not substantiate His actions to work people to His way of thinking. He does the Father’s will quietly and consistently, and the consequences of His words and actions testify about Him. People

who have got the healing and release, redemption of their sins and relief of their burdens testify about Him.

Jesus is not looking for glory. In many cases He asks the healed people not to tell anyone about Him. People's well-being is the motif for the deeds performed by Jesus. He does not use His fame. He has got through miracles to achieve His goals. He considers fame to be an obstacle and a temptation. He reproaches Judeans who accept glory from each other and are not looking for glory from God. They are looking for the human, earthly things, and that prevents them from seeing the truth.

The prophecies about the Messiah, recorded in the Old Testament, that were fulfilled in the life of Jesus, were designed to become a sign for the scribes and Pharisees. Some of them (the advent of the Son of God into the world, His birth from the Virgin, sufferings and death among criminals, redemption of sins) still keep making the disciples of Christ surprised. How could it have happened that the Old-Testament prophets heard from God and recorded such apt words about the birth in Bethlehem, return from Egypt, life in Nazareth.

Words and deeds prove that Jesus is the Son of God. Nobody had ever revealed so much truth about the Heavenly Father to people, His character and His attitude to His children before Christ. No one had ever preached with such power, as a sovereign.

Miracles testify about Jesus. That is why many Jews came to believe Jesus, listened to Him and considered Him to be righteous. Particularly, ordinary people who felt at a loss, like sheep without a

shepherd. Only the ones in whom there was no love for God rejected the Son of God.

May 15

Saturday

Acts 5: 21-33

John 6: 14-27

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Acts 5: 21-33

When they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and went on with their teaching.

When the high priest and those with him arrived, they called together the council and the whole body of the elders of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the temple police went there, they did not find them in the prison; so they returned and reported, “We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside.” Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were perplexed about them, wondering what might be going on. Then someone arrived and announced, “Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!” Then the captain went with

the temple police and brought them, but without violence, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority. The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them.

John 6: 14-27

When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world."

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming

near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there. They also saw that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. Then some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal."

Meditation

The boat here symbolises our life. The apostles of Jesus sail in this boat, while their Teacher is praying for them alone on the mountain. Many times this boat must overcome the stormy waves. Sometimes the sea around (the world) is calm and friendly, but sometimes it is rough and throws the ship in all directions, threatening to sink it. It even happens that water and foam flood this simple fishing boat.

But at such critical moments Christ appears, walking calmly on the stormy water. And He says: *It is I; do not be afraid.*

In the Bible, the sea symbolises chaos, devastating elements, destruction or the world. And the cautions that the world cannot be relied on, that its waves cannot be ridden on, that it can drown you at any moment, seem exaggerated only at the first glance.

Try to recall all the situations when the world tried to subdue you to its will, threatening to destroy. This may have happened back at school, when confessing your faith in Christ, disagreeing with the injustice or cruelty of others meant losing your status in the eyes of the class or even physical revenge. You may have experienced a situation during your student years when you had *to be like everyone else*, when you had to play according to the rules of the majority: entertainments, alcohol, sexual incontinence. Perhaps you constantly face such situations at work, when there is a temptation to take or give others things that do not belong to you; or among your colleagues, when it is necessary to silently agree to a collective guilt for the sake of a distorted sense of solidarity; or even in your family, when there is a constant pressure on your Christian position regarding married life, family planning, raising children, etc.

They got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified.

The panic caused by the chaos of the world in your life can only be removed by Christ. And our task is to notice Him as He is approaching to our boat.

Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

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