



Dear Parish Family:

On a recent Sunday morning, a familiar passage from Scripture spoke in a fresh way. Matthew 14 is packed with action: the deceit of Herodias in manipulating Herod to end the life of John the Baptist; the feeding of the 5000, showing God's compassion, healing, and provision for people in desolate places; and Jesus placing the disciples in the boat, sending them to the other side of the lake, before he walks to them on the water, evoking their fear.

What struck me again was Peter's request of Jesus: "Lord, command me to come to you on the water." Jesus does so, but his command does not dispel Peter's fear or enable him to walk upon the water for long. Seeing the wind and the waves, Peter begins to sink and cries out: "Lord, save me."

Rather than humanity at its worst and weakest, this is humanity at its best: "Lord, save me." As I heard this, I thought of our shared life and ministry at the Advent, and the cry of the world. Whether silently, frenetically, or despairingly, our cry is "save me." We phrase it in numerous ways, but the cry is the same: save, have mercy, please, help.

Peter's cry is the fundamental cry of humanity, and the grace of God meets this need. The intervening grace of Jesus pulls Peter from the chaos and saves.

This note is an invitation to give. As recipients of God's grace, who love because he first loved us, we walk freely, giving from what we have been given. The world cries out as fears and challenges abound, and we know and hold out Jesus, the Lord who saves.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Craig".

The Very Rev. R. Craig Smalley
Dean and Rector

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