Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



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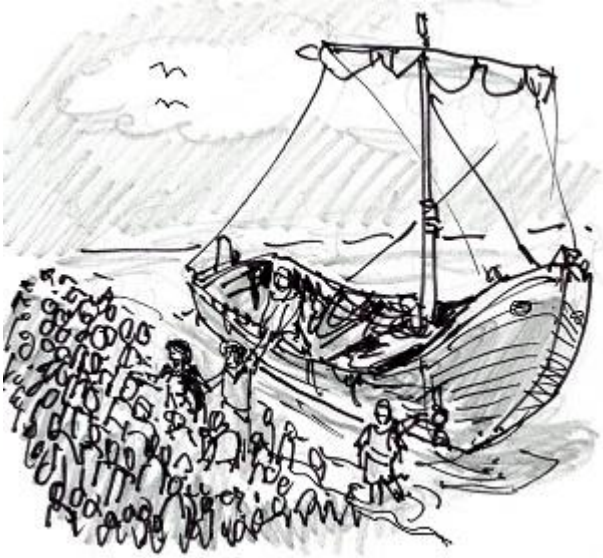

“He told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush him” (Mark 3:9).

Heb 7:25—8:6; *Mk 3:7-12*

Mark’s Gospel begins by proclaiming that Jesus is the "Son of God." From the start of his ministry, his very presence changes everything. In a series of dramatic miracles

of healing and exorcism – a possessed man in the synagogue, Peter's mother-in-law, multiple cures in Capernaum, a leper, a paralyzed man lowered through the roof, a man with a withered hand — Jesus is revealed as the living embodiment of God's grace in the world.

The message is clear: The power of Satan has been broken. Unclean spirits acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God with the power to restore creation to its original state before sin distorted human behavior and brought sickness and death into the world. People from everywhere throng to catch a glimpse of Jesus and to try to touch him. In danger of being crushed, Jesus tells his disciples to have a boat ready to take him out onto the lake.

The story reveals deeper meaning. Jesus' mission is not instantly to transform creation by divine command, but to enlist the free participation of people open to personal and social conversion. With an initial burst of miracles, it is as though Jesus has given the crowds a glimpse of the glory God wants for them. But it will not happen automatically or without their participation. Just as human sin entered the world by willed disobedience, so God's promise will also be renewed only with human consent and obedience.

Besides this, Jesus' mission is not confined to his first-century mission, but it must go beyond physical touch to a total transformation that reaches into history itself. There is only one Jesus of Nazareth, but as the crucified and risen Christ he will belong to every generation, able to touch every person who comes to him. He will do this not with his earthly hands but with his mystical body, the church. His touch will continue through the sacraments, be present in the Eucharist for every faith community, active in the ministry of the church wherever it reaches, and alive within every human being who loves and serves others, longs for peace and works for justice.

This mystery is conveyed in the narrative when Jesus removes himself from the crowds by being taken into a boat that pushes away from the shore and onto the lake. This is where so many gospel scenes take place that are both in time and in the timeless mystery of the risen Christ, who can calm night storms and walk on the water, teaching Peter to join him, showing the disciples not to be afraid of their own experience of crossing over from death to new life.

We are living this same mysterious process now. Jesus invites us to freely participate in the transformation of the world, beginning with our own conversion of heart and commitment to grow as disciples and members of his body. Jesus is with us in the

boat of the church and beyond it as together we make passage from death to new life. If we believe this by imitating Jesus, we will share in his power to heal and liberate, calm and guide others to God. This is the joy of the Gospel.