

## *Nineteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time (A)*

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33

### Scripture Focus

Part of the purpose for this Gospel passage was to encourage the community. This account was written fifty years after the Resurrection event. Matthew's audience is suffering opposition, rejection, even persecution. They are beginning to worry that the risen Lord has abandoned them as well. Here Jesus reassures his followers, telling them not to be afraid. Matthew gives special attention to Peter's attempt to walk on water. Peter often acted impulsively. He came to realize his weakness and his need to rely on the Lord for help. Matthew hopes his listeners will come to the same recognition.

### Life Focus

1. When has fear overcome trust in your life?
2. Relate an experience when you trusted at first but later began to lose faith.
3. Where do you find courage in your life?

## **1 ½ - Two Hour Format for small Church Community Meeting**

Gathering (A few minutes are spent settling down)

### 1. Faith Sharing in Small Groups

Read the gospel of next Sunday out loud. Then take some time to read and reflect on Scripture Focus and Life Focus questions.

Count off for people to form groups of three (four at the most) to share on the Life Focus questions. (20 minutes)

### 2. Faith Sharing with the Whole Group

Reread the gospel passage out loud.

Then entire group focuses attention on answering the following questions:  
(Remember to honor and respect the confidential nature of the previous faith sharing.)

From your faith sharing in the smaller groups, what touched, encouraged or motivated you?

How might it affect your attitude or actions at home, at work, or in the larger community?

How about your small church community –how might all of you together respond to the gospel's challenge? (20 minutes)

### 3. Shared Prayer

Reread the gospel passage out loud a third time.

Then stand in a circle and take a few turns praying spontaneously together as the Spirit moves the group (prayers of petition, thanksgiving, praise, whatever). This is the time to hear the particular needs of the members and to pray for them.

### Refreshments