

## A way to overcome loneliness: 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday 2024

Have you ever experienced loneliness in your life? Knowing that you are alone can increase your pain. When you feel that deep loneliness, you may fail to recognize even the help that is close to you. We have a similar experience in today's gospel. It is the context of Jesus calming down the storm in the sea.

Jesus with his disciples were on a journey in the boat. Without knowing the developing storm and the danger it posed to those inside, Jesus was peacefully sleeping on a cushion. When things really went out of their control, they woke him up and asked: "Master, do you not care that we are perishing?"

Even though, Jesus was with them at the time of storm, why did they feel lonely and abandoned? Possibly we can find two reasons:

1. They just forgot that the Lord Jesus was with them. We should remember the fact that there is no one '*without anyone*'. It is at the time when we forget about those around us that we feel lonely amidst storms in life. Have we not sometimes forgotten those around us in hard times, times of storms and loneliness? Have we not lived times feeling, "there is no one with me", or "even God doesn't want me, or He is away from me"? Not because God is not with me, but because I am not aware that He is with me, that I go through such loneliness and helplessness in my life.
2. The second reason for the disciples to feel helpless and abandoned is that, they just felt Jesus not *as one among them*, but as an outsider. They thought that the problem is only for them and not for him, and the storm wouldn't affect him. While I start thinking that the problems are only mine, and not others; or 'my prayers are fruitless, because they are not being heard; God does

not love me anymore, and it's all a lie- to think that God takes care of me', actually we are making God an outsider, as one who is one not with me.

But Jesus was not like that. Imagine for a moment, what storms he had to pass through? But he did not easily give way to despair, feeling alone. And how was this possible? How many were there around him, who hated him, who want to kill him, get rid of him? He had to pass through the betrayal of those close to him, the denial and the abandoning of all whom he considered reliable friends.

Even at the darkest moment of his life, like Getsemani or walking with the cross amidst people who abuse him, curse him and saying hateful words, Jesus was never alone. Not because he had no reason to go despair or feel abandoned, but continuously remembering his Father, and making sure that his Father is with him at every moment of his suffering, *he was overcoming the pain of mind and body*. That is why even the most excruciating pain and rejection couldn't succeed in defeating him.

You should never think that there won't be any problem for me if God is with me. It is not like that. Instead, amidst storms, not loosing hope and living the experience that I am never alone, is the way Jesus looked at it and overcame difficulties in life. Will this not be possible for us as well? If God is the light that man found amid his darkness, why should we experience furthermore loneliness? Why can't we too experience the abundance of that light? To be able to enjoy that light, you should practice more to sit with Him in calmness, in prayer and enjoy deeper his presence in your life. Love, allow me to experience your peace as I remember you and sit with you. Amen.