

## Matthew 14: Jesus Walks On The Water



***It's not the ship in the water but the water in the ship that sinks it.  
So it's not the Christian in the world but the world in the Christian  
that constitutes the danger.***

Ships and water were powerful symbols in Christ's time. Christ often preached from boats, or used boats to cross from one place to another. Many of his followers as well as those He preached to were fishermen themselves. They knew the dangers and blessings of that way of life. And they also knew that the ocean was filled with fabulous metaphors for the spiritual journey of a faithful person.



Today, our Church places in our midst the lesson of Jesus Walking on Water. Most of us are tremendously aware of how the disciples, on the boat saw Jesus coming to them, walking on water. And how Peter asked if he also could walk on water with Jesus, and how eventually he began to sink when he saw the waves and felt the wind, and how Jesus reached down and plucked him out of the water.



We live in a society that loves to place blame on outside influences forces for failures and shortcomings in their lives. It is always someone else's fault never mine. And our society

has given us a plethora of excuses for our sins: It's my marriage, my children, my job, my family, the way I was raised. And sure, at times, we have lasting scars from our childhood that affect who we are today. I must say that in my experience as a pastoral counselor, I notice that very often people hide behind these excuses instead of confronting them and working through them.



How do we overcome outside influences—by simply keeping our focus on Christ. This, after all, was the mistake that Peter made. He was doing well in the beginning when he started walking on the water. It was only after he noticed the wind pick up and the waves rise that he began to sink. He lost his focus.



As many of you know, I love to golf, though I wish I had more time to play. I also like to watch the professionals play on TV. My favorite golfer is Tiger Woods, not because he wins often, but because of his focus and determination when he is playing.

US Open, thousand of people moving around.

I play and the smallest thing distracts me.

Professional athletes are able to remove all those distraction and play at a level that we can never achieve.



It is the same with our spiritual lives. If we are focused on Christ and His teachings, if we come to Church and receive the sacraments, then it is easier to overcome the distractions of

this world and the attacks of the evil one. Confession cleanses our souls and we receive spiritual direction. Communion fills us with Christ Himself and sanctifies us.



The world tells us that we are the only ones who are important.

The world tells us that we are victims of other's actions.

The world tells us that we can blame others.

Christ tells us that everyone is important.

Christ tells us that we have to take responsibility for our actions.

Christ tells us that we are made in His image and likeness and that there is nothing we cannot do with His help.

He told us that if we have faith as the size of a grain of mustard seed we can move mountains.



St. Peter, although he did not walk on water and he denied Christ, got it right in the end.

His shadow could heal the sick and he was the leader of the early Church. He did not blame others for his shortcomings. He took responsibility for his own actions. He repented and began a new life in Christ. We too can do this. We must keep our focus on Christ and not let anything else distract us from His love and Will. Amen.



