



Bringing Home the Word

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time,

June 21, 2015

Jesus Is Lord Over the Wind and Sea, Over All Creation, and Over Us as Well

By Mary K. Deeley

My brother, sister, and I learned to sail when we were young. Of all the lessons we had, the one I remember nearly verbatim was “Signs of an Approaching Storm.” I can reel off the list as though it were yesterday: dark, low, fast-moving clouds; a sudden shift in wind direction and velocity; a sudden change in temperature.

To this day, when I experience any of these things, I close windows and make sure everything is inside. I think the apostles who were seasoned fishermen must have had similar training, and I have often wondered why they just

didn’t make for shore when they noticed the signs. But then I remember that some storms move in very quickly and, if you are in the middle of the sea, you can’t make it to shore easily. The apostles may have decided to ride it out and then realized they could not.

It must have struck the apostles as odd that Jesus was peacefully asleep while they battled rising water and fierce wind. They were afraid of losing their lives. When they woke Jesus up, Scripture says that he “rebuked” the wind and the sea. The same word is used when Jesus casts out demons. The result is peace—at least on the sea or in the person who is possessed.

But for the disciples and for us, the act inspires awe and not a little anxiety: “Who then is this?” The answer unfolds for us throughout the Gospels. Jesus is Lord over the wind and sea, over all creation, and over us as well. In storm or calm, he brings his peace and shows us God’s glory. †

A Word From Pope Francis

Children are the most beautiful gift and blessing that the Creator has given to



man and woman.... Today sadly we must speak about the “passions” which many of them endure. From the first moments of their lives, many children are rejected, abandoned, and robbed of their childhood and future. There are those who dare to say, as if to justify themselves, that it was a mistake to bring these children into the world. This is shameful! Let’s not unload our faults onto the children, please! Children are never a “mistake.” Their hunger is not a mistake, nor is their poverty, their vulnerability, their abandonment—so many children abandoned on the streets—and neither is their ignorance or their helplessness...so many children don’t even know what a school is. If anything, these should be reasons to love them all the more, with greater generosity. How can we make such solemn declarations on human rights and the rights of children, if we then punish children for the errors of adults?

General audience, April 8, 2015

Sunday Readings

Job 38:1, 8–11

Here shall your proud waves be stilled.

2 Corinthians 5:14–17

Whoever is in Christ is a new creation.

Mark 4:35–41

The wind ceased and there was great calm. Excerpted from *One Hour With Saint Padre Pio*, © Liguori Publications

St. Padre Pio: “The Second St. Francis”

Excerpted from *One Hour With Saint Padre Pio*, © Liguori Publications

Many people believe Padre Pio to have been the greatest person of the twentieth century. He is often called “the second St. Francis.” Pope St. John Paul II canonized him on June 16, 2002.

Pio, named Francesco, was born on May 25, 1887, in Pietrelcina, in southern Italy. He was the fourth of six children.

From his earliest days, Francesco showed a strong spiritual disposition, received visits from our Lady, had various mystical experiences and knew that he was called to become a priest. He was accepted into the Capuchin Franciscan novitiate at the age of sixteen and took the name Pio, which means pious. However, Pio became so weak with lung troubles that he had to continue his studies at home. He remained there for seven years, studying, praying, fasting, and suffering and was dispensed for early ordination, receiving the sacrament on August 10, 1910.

About a month later, while Pio was praying in the reed hut he had built in his family’s fields, Christ and Mary appeared before him, and Pio received the stigmata, Christ’s wounds, in his own flesh. The stigmata were a great source of pain and also of embarrassment for Pio, but his only prayer—which was granted—was for the wounds to become invisible.

During World War I, Pio was drafted into the army, but as he was always on

sick leave, he was soon discharged. His superiors sent him to Our Lady of Grace Friary at San Giovanni Rotondo, where the good air of Mount Gargano was supposed to promote health. There, on the eighth anniversary of his receiving the now-invisible stigmata, Pio was praying before the crucifix after Mass when he was pierced with rays of light from the crucified Christ. From that moment until just before his death fifty years later, Pio visibly bore the bleeding wounds of Christ in his hands, feet, and side. Pio wore half-gloves to hide the holes in his hands and a sash to absorb the blood from his side. Pain became his constant companion, but he kept it to himself, and it was noticeable to others only when he walked about. In obedience to his superiors, he had to undergo various intrusive medical examinations to ascertain the cause of the wounds, but no medical rationale would ever explain them or the “celestial perfume” that surrounded him.

Despite all attempts to hide the stigmata, word spread, and throngs of faithful Catholics soon flocked to San Giovanni Rotondo to attend Mass with the holy Pio and to wait in line to have him hear confession. He became known for his ability to read souls, discern intentions, predict the future, and effect cures and healings. He was famous for the beauty of his Masses, which could last for two hours. Between Mass and confessions, Pio’s workday encompassed nineteen hours; his health was fine, but he ate so sparingly for years—only 300

or 400 calories per day—that doctors believed a source of supernatural energy kept him alive.

Pio was also known to communicate with guardian angels and to bilocate. It is also believed that his warfare with demons became physical.

His gifts made him an object of intense devotion—indeed, at times, hysteria—and the Vatican downplayed his notoriety. Nevertheless, Pio exercised a wonderful ministry, effecting numerous conversions. In imitation of Jesus, he accepted a life of victimhood, offering his sacrifice for the salvation of souls everywhere but particularly for those in purgatory. By 1967, Pio was weakening, and the stigmata began to disappear, though the pain remained. By the time of his death on September 23, 1968, the wounds had completely disappeared.

Yet the special ministry of this victim soul has not really ended, for the well-documented accounts of his amazing life continue to bring people to San Giovanni Rotondo, where they seek the truth and love that Padre Pio brought to all the souls he touched.



Lord, you gave your life as a gift of love for the whole world. Help me be a selfless servant of your love, compassion, and peace. Amen.

WEEKDAY READINGS June 22–27

Mon.	Weekday <i>Genesis 12:1–9 / Matthew 7:1–5</i>	Thurs.	Weekday <i>Genesis 16:1–12, 15–16 or 16:6b–12, 15–16 / Matthew 7:21–29</i>
Tues.	Weekday <i>Genesis 13:2, 5–18 / Matthew 7:6, 12–14</i>	Fri.	Weekday <i>Genesis 17:1, 9–10, 15–22 Matthew 8:1–4</i>
Wed.	<i>Nativity of St. John the Baptist Jeremiah 1:4–10 / 1 Peter 1:8–12 Luke 1:5–17</i>	Sat.	Weekday <i>Genesis 18:1–15 / Matthew 8:5–17</i>