

*Fourth Sunday after Epiphany: A Great Tempest Arose*  
February 3, 2019

“And behold, a great tempest arose in the sea.” Matt 8:24

We all want peace and joy, rejoicing in God’s grace. We do not want trouble, and yet, trouble seems to find us, “a great tempest arose”. If we are going to follow Christ, we are also going to be chased by the evil one who wants to take us away from God. Today’s gospel shows us that storms do come to the Church, but it also shows us that Christ is still in the boat, He is still in the Church.

On Thursday the Archdiocese released a list of names of priests that have been credibly accused of sexual crimes involving minors. The Archdiocese did this for the sake of transparency and accountability, and to help the healing from this tempest that is rocking the Church as a whole. We have to remember that Christ is still in the boat and will quell the storm, but we have to cry to Him in prayer, as the apostles did in the boat when they thought they were going to perish. We are rightly saddened and deeply troubled by the past events, but this should lead us to be more vigilant in protecting our children and making sure this horror is not repeated.

These horrors also take place outside the Church in great numbers. Any lessons learned here in the Church, where the crimes take on a greater sinfulness because of the trust we should be able to have in our clergy, should lead us to greater vigilance with our children and protect them from anyone who might want to harm them. The present licentiousness in our society and the attempt to make all accept alternate lifestyles will only continue to lead people to sin in these ways. The internet is a dangerous place, where many of these ideas are floating around and planting their evil seeds in the mind of people everywhere. One statistic I read, claimed that 80% of internet traffic is related to pornography. If this number is even close to the truth, we have a grave moral obligation to make sure our homes are protected from this scourge by filtering and closely regulating internet use in the home and on the so-called smart phones. Through these trials, a purification can result that will lead to a safer place for all of us but we must first wake our Lord by our prayers and sacrifices so that a great calm can be restored.

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