

A NOTE TO PARENTS

Wild and fabulous as today's story is, it absolutely rings true as a dramatization of the life of faith and prayer. Jesus has just done something wonderful—he has fed the five thousand. Everybody else then goes home, having gotten their money's worth and more, while Jesus stays in the wilderness to pray. Filled with the Holy Spirit and the transforming power of God, he sets out across the lake, walking on the water, not as some kind of stunt but almost as if he were unaware that there was anything unusual about it, as Moses was unaware, when he came down from Mount Sinai, that his face was shining so brightly that no one could look at him. Meanwhile, a storm has brewed on the lake, and what seemed a nice, uneventful trip home has turned into a nightmare. Laboring desperately to keep control of the boat, they look up and see Jesus passing by them—serene and distant, apparently as oblivious to them and to their terror as if they, and the storm, did not exist. His very serenity and oblivion compound their terror, as God's apparent obliviousness mocks our agony when we cry out to him for help. But he turns and notices them. "What are you afraid of? It's only me," he calls out: *You know me. I'm not distant, supernatural, unrelated to you and your life and your fear. I know you. I know what you are going through. You can trust me.*

Peter, in his characteristic way, goes right to the heart of the matter: "Lord, if it's you, bid me come to you, walking on the water." *If you really can bridge that gap between the worlds, if you can walk through the midst of this storm, untouched by it and unafraid, and still know what I'm going through, then pull me out of my isolation and terror and bring me to where you are. Then I'll know I really can trust you.* Jesus says, "Come," and Peter comes. For a moment it's working: his eyes on Jesus, he steps out across the water. But the wind and the waves are so real to him, and Jesus still so far away ... and now he has left the boat behind, too ... The spell breaks: "HELP ME, LORD!!" Sadly but without surprise, Jesus asks, "Why didn't you trust me?" But he does help him. The miracle is over, but they are safe, in the boat; and the contact, however brief, was made. Greater wonders can wait.

© 1990 by Gretchen Wolff Pritchard. All rights reserved.
THE SUNDAY PAPER, 19 Colony Road, New Haven, CT 06511, USA
203 - 624-2520 • www.the-sunday-paper.com



THE SUNDAY PAPER

JUNIOR

Year A
PROPER 14
TRACKS 1 and 2

After Jesus fed the crowd, his disciples
rowed back across the lake.
But Jesus stayed behind to pray.

MATTHEW 14:23



WHILE THEY WERE ROWING HOME, A BIG STORM CAME ON.

Suddenly, they saw Jesus, walking towards them on the water!!

Jesus said, "Don't be afraid; it's just me."

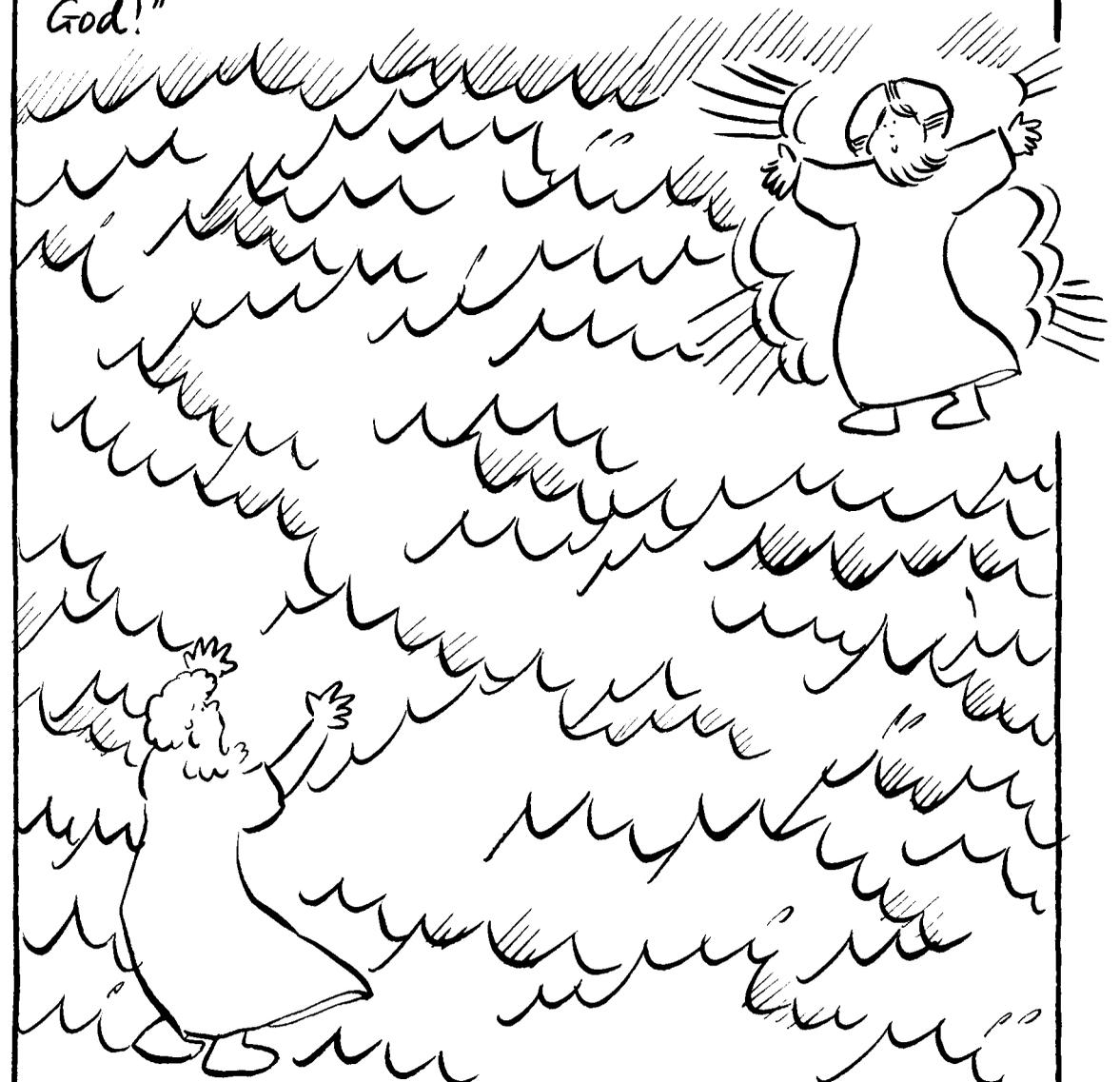


Peter said, "Lord, if it's you, tell me to walk on the water to you." Jesus said, "Come on!"

And Peter did! But he got scared and began to sink. Jesus said, "Why didn't you trust me?"



When Jesus got into the boat, the storm stopped. Jesus's friends said, "You must be the Son of God!"



Help Peter walk across the water to Jesus.