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# REFLECTION

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## Jesus Asleep in the Boat



*On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? Mark 4:35-41 (NRSV)*

Jesus’ disciples were fishermen – they were used to being out on the water. They would have had routines and a built-in hierarchy; they would have known how to work together on the boat. What might be scary and unsettling to you and I would have been very normal to them. They would have known far more about being on the water than the teacher Jesus.

We have become church wardens, readers, treasurers, parish safeguarding officers, pioneers, clergy and flower arrangers – We are used to running all aspects of the church. We have routines and built-in hierarchies; we know how to work together and what things should look like. It may look odd and perplexing to outsiders, but it is very normal to us. We know far more about running churches than that first century teacher Jesus does.

The great windstorm broke and the disciples panicked. The bible infers that this was a rapid scaling up of the weather, but it could have come gradually too. The sailors amongst the disciples would not have struggled with normal weather, they would have relied on their skills when things got rough, but they ended up at a last resort calling on Jesus to help them – and he had the power to calm the storm.

We are in a storm – and none of our usual processes are going to work, we will flounder and get mouthfuls of water, we will find solutions that work for a minute that fail soon after. I am not going to guess why or how it has come; in my experience of disability, bad things do happen and looking for God in them or blaming humanity does not help, but in the storm we need to turn to Jesus afresh. He was asleep, but he was right there with them and he is right here with us too.

**Further Biblical Reflections** – I run a bible reflection discussion on Twitter at 7.30pm each Wednesday @Strgl\_St\_Bible – This community only started in February, but is providing myself and other isolated Christians with support and encouragement as we look at the bible through the eyes of disabled people. For more information about our work - <https://holdingspaceuk.wordpress.com/>

**Daily Office** – My friends at Disability and Jesus run the ordinary office and other services at <http://anordinaryoffice.org.uk/>

