

June 20, 2021
12th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Job 38:1, 8-11
2 Cor 5:14-17
Mk 4:35-41

Happy Father's Day to all you dads and granddads out there—and to you, Fr Edison. Today is the day to honor and take care of the owners of those loving hands that took care of you, from changing your diaper; to picking you up when you fell; to running alongside you as you learned to ride a bike; to teaching you how to throw a ball and hold a bat; to guiding you down that long church aisle to begin your married life; to sharing with you the Body and Blood of Christ. Take a moment today to thank God for the gift of fathers, and to thank Him for being Our Father.

In addition to fathers, our Heavenly Father provides us many helping hands during our lifetimes, especially in times of trouble.

When I was a boy growing up on the east coast, I had a cousin six years older than me. To me, he was the consummate "big boy" who knew everything and could do everything. His name was Rick.

Rick and his parents used to spend the summers on the Brigantine Bay at the Jersey shore. They always rented a house right on the bay because my uncle loved boats and fishing. For his 16th birthday Rick's parents bought him his own little boat—more like an oversized bathtub with an engine that would under power a lawn mower. Rick was the king of the back bay putting around in his little boat.

One weekend my parents and I went to visit, and Rick was permitted to take me out in his boat. As we shoved off from the dock, my Uncle's

last words to his son were: "Don't even think about going anywhere near the ocean".

Of course, we headed straight for the inlet and out into the open ocean. As we passed through the inlet everyone was waving heartily at us. Impressed

with all the friendly people, I waved back enthusiastically. In hindsight, I think they were waving at two foolish kids telling us to turn around.

It was a beautiful day, calm seas and not a cloud in the sky. And then the squall blew up. The wind blew. The rain began pelting us. Clouds closed in around us to near zero visibility. And the ocean roared.

I was petrified. My cousin was fighting to keep the boat headed into the wind and waves. Water was pouring over the sides. There was only one life jacket in the boat. My cousin told me to put it on. He then handed me a bucket and told me to bail. I couldn't keep up.

Rick then very calmly, but firmly, told me there was a compass on the life vest I was wearing. He told me not to panic if I should find myself in the water separated from the boat. He said: "We're not that far from shore. Just swim slowly and steadily toward the northwest. You will find land, even if it takes a few hours. You're a strong swimmer for a kid, and that vest will keep you afloat."

I no longer felt fearful. In the midst of mayhem Rick had managed to instill confidence in me with absolutely no thought for himself.

And then as quickly as it had blown up, the squall passed. The sea calmed, the rain stopped, the clouds dissipated, and the sun returned. We could see land. We bailed out the boat and headed for the inlet.

Remove all fear. Instill confidence. That's what my cousin did for me that day. That's what Jesus did for His apostles in the back of that boat on the Sea of Galilee 2000 years ago. That's what faith can do for us in our lives when we encounter all sorts of storms, big and small.

But for faith to work in our lives, we must nourish it. Nourish it by spending time dialoguing with God. Nourish it with frequent Holy Communion. Nourish it by passing it on to your children, especially you fathers out there. Bring your kids to church. Most of all, nourish it by sharing it with others by doing what you can to remove all fear from their lives and to instill confidence in them by showing them how to trust the Lord. Be the helping hands the world

so desperately needs. Practice makes perfect, so practice your faith—every day.

The first thing the apostles did when threatened by the storm was to run to Jesus. **To whom do you run when you're in trouble?**