

The Peace of Christ When the World Closes In.

1. Help: I ask God to help me to pray with something like: “Guide and direct me O Lord; come to me in a very intimate way; let me not be afraid.”

2. Quiet: I spend a few moments simply listening to all the sounds around me; I do not try to block them out. I do not fight them; I let them in. Let me become aware of my breathing as well for a few moments: relaxed, natural breaths. I relax and become aware of my body. I make an act of faith that God is as real as the sounds around me, as truly present as the air I breath and which fills me with life; I am a temple of the Holy Spirit (*1 Corinthians 6:19*).

3. Grace: I ask God for the grace, the Divine Favor and Presence, that I need this day.

4. Scripture: Let me enter this scene with Peter and the other Apostles: I use my imagination to *see* who the characters are and what is going on; to *hear* what is being said and *who is* saying it and with what emotion. Let me try to *feel* if I can what is being felt, etc. Or, if I am not given to such imagination, let me simply ask what word, image, phrase, feeling, etc. touches me as I read the passage, once, twice.

[Matthew 14: 22-32](#): Jesus reaching out to Peter in the storm at sea.

Let me pause over what touches, calls, challenges, troubles, or consoles me. Let me ask for the patience and courage to stay with that and no more. Let me especially savor the presence of Christ if He touches me.

5. Some questions that may help: Is there something closing in on me as there was on Peter as he became engulfed by the storm raging about him? The lesson is pretty clear isn't it? He became frightened and overwhelmed because he took his eyes and mind off Jesus and began to focus on the storm. Can I focus on Jesus now and talk to him about what it is that may be hemming me in, however small or big the storm may be? What do I tell Him? How does He look upon me? And does He approach me; reach out to me? Can I let Him grasp my hand? “Lord, save me!” Peter cried out. That is mature faith, not simply getting out of the boat. Mature faith is asking for and allowing Jesus to grasp me by the hand in the storms of life. Salvation is as simple and profound as that. And let me ask to hear those simple, yet powerfully reassuring and loving words which Jesus speaks as Risen Lord: “It is I.” “Do not be afraid.” “Peace be with you.”

6. Let me savor the presence of Christ and then end with deep gratitude for the real and abiding presence of Christ in every aspect and at all times in my life and the lives of all those I love. I end with an Our Father or some other favorite prayer.