

## **Featured Story**

Jesus Helps Us in Times of Trouble  
(Matthew 8:23–27)

## **Lesson Goals**

- to recognize Jesus as the Son of God who is with us in times of trouble
- to define ourselves as disciples of Jesus who call on him in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- to explain our sins are forgiven and we are restored to peace when we receive absolution

## **Materials Needed**

- The Catholic Children’s Bible
- Chapter 7 activity booklet
- Treasure map
- Stickers
- Journey Book
- Coloring and writing tools
- Glue, tape
- A tub of water
- At least three plastic boats
- A piece of newspaper

# *Jesus Helps Us Always*

## **Background Focus** (for parents)

The brains of second graders are still developing, and so their interpretation of events is often very literal. This lesson bridges the gap between a literal and a metaphorical understanding of an event. Understanding the storm at sea metaphorically, we can help the children understand Jesus is with them during their own stormy times.

We may not realize how often we speak in metaphors. Accepting a drink, we say, “Thanks. That hits the spot.” (What spot? Where?) Speaking of an obstacle we have encountered, perhaps a difficulty with another person was resolved, we say, “She gave me a run for my money.” (This metaphor comes from horse racing.)

In today’s lesson, with its scriptural account of Jesus calming the sea, we see Jesus actually quieting the Sea of Galilee—but this is also a metaphor for his presence and help with us always, especially in times of trouble, and especially in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

# Go (10 minutes)

## Opening Prayer

 **Child:** Turn to page 1 in the Chapter 7 activity booklet and locate the prayer on the page.

**Together:** Begin prayer with the Sign of the Cross.

- (Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)
- Read the prayer aloud.
- End with an “Amen” and the Sign of the Cross.

## Engage Activity

### **Materials Needed:**

A tub of water  
2-3 plastic boats

**Parent:** Place the pan or tub of water on a table, preferably on top of a plastic tablecloth. The kitchen sink or, the bathtub may be used.

 **Child:** Place a boat in the water.

 What do you think would happen if a storm came up and the wind blew hard?

(The boats would be in danger. They might sink.)

 Make waves in the tub with your hands and sink the boat.

**Parent:** Explain that something similar happened to Jesus and his followers. A storm came up on the sea, but Jesus saved them!

# Seek (30 minutes)

## Featured Story

- ✚ **Child:** Find Matthew 8:23–27 in The Catholic Children’s Bible. (page 1466)
- ✚ Turn the page to the Featured Story on page 1468 and place an “I found it!” sticker on the page.

(The words between the leaves are a shortened version of the Scripture story on the previous page.)

- ✚ Look at the pictures. Describe what you see in the artwork.
- ✚ Read the title of the story.
- ✚ Look at the vocabulary words at the bottom of the page. Read each word, and the definition.

**Parent:** Introduce the Bible story by explaining many of the disciples were fishermen. Include the following information:

- The disciples fished on the Sea of Galilee, which is a large body of water in Israel.
- Jesus and the disciples sometimes used boats to travel from one side of the sea to the other. Sometimes there were storms on the sea.
- Read the Bible story to your child.
- Ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as these:
  - What happened while Jesus and the disciples were crossing the sea in the boat?  
(A storm came up.)
  - What was Jesus doing?  
(He was asleep.)
  - What did the disciples do?  
(They woke up Jesus.)
  - What did they ask Jesus?  
(To save them.)
  - What did Jesus do?

- (He ordered the winds and the waves to stop.)
- How did the disciples feel?  
(They were amazed. They wondered who Jesus was.)
  - Remind your child: We know who Jesus is. Jesus is the Son of God!

 **Child:** Turn to page 2 in the activity booklet and complete the activity.  
(Answers: 1. b, 2. c, 3. b, 4. b, 5. c, 6. c, 7. c)

## Understand It!

 **Child:** Read Understand It! on page 1469.

**Parent:** Ask your child to summarize what they just read and review these key points with them:

- Jesus is with us, not only in the good things of life but also in the storms.
- When the disciples are in a storm, they wake Jesus and ask for help.
- Jesus wants us to have faith and trust in him.
- Expand upon these points as follows:
  - Sometimes we are in storms. These storms can be outside of us or inside of us.
  - A storm is anytime we need help. A “storm” is not only a thunderstorm or a hurricane. A hard time in our lives is called a “stormy time.”
  - Jesus is more powerful than any storm, because Jesus is God.
  - Jesus is our friend, who is with us in any trouble. He is especially with us when we confess our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## Live It!

 **Child:** Read Live It! on page 1469.

**Parent:** Ask your child how they might feel if they were out in a boat and a storm came up. Assure them it is normal to be frightened sometimes. Remind them Jesus is always with them.

## Tell It!

- ✚ **Child:** Look at the images in Tell It! on page 1469.
- ✚ Look at the third frame (#3).
- ✚ Read what Jesus says to the storm.  
(“Be still.”)
- ✚ Why could Jesus stop the storm?  
(Because Jesus is God.)
- ✚ Use the pictures in Tell it! to retell the story in your own words.
- ✚ Use some of the smaller stickers to mark parts of the Featured Story pages that capture your interest.  
(Remember to save enough stickers to use on the remaining Chapters.)

## Core Learning Activity

### Sailing with Jesus

**Materials Needed:**  
Piece of newspaper

**Parent:** Explain: Jesus is the Son of God, and each one of us is a **disciple**. A **disciple** is a close follower of Jesus.

- Today we are going on an imaginary boat ride with Jesus, and we will make sailor hats to wear on the boat.
- YouTube instructions if needed:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=553rpT3u15M>
- Give your child a half-piece of newspaper

- ✚ **Child:** Fold the piece of newspaper in half.
- ✚ Fold one corner down to the center, leaving about an inch at the bottom.
- ✚ Then fold the other corner down to meet the previous corner in the center.  
This will make a triangle.
- ✚ Fold the bottom flaps up on one side and then the other. Use tape as needed.
- ✚ Put on your sailor hat. Sit down, fold your arms and close your eyes.

**Parent:** Take your child on a guided meditation using the following prompts:  
Read slowly. Try to create a picture in their mind for them to be in the story.

- Imagine that you are in a boat with Jesus and the disciples.
  - The boat is rocking gently back and forth.
  - Keep your eyes closed but rock gently back and forth.
  - Jesus is tired, so he falls asleep in the back of the boat.
  - You and the other disciples are talking together quietly.
- Suddenly the wind begins to blow!
  - The disciples quickly pull down the sail.
  - “Hang on!” Peter says.
  - “It looks like we’re in for a storm!”
  - The thunder rolls and the lightning flashes.
  - Suddenly the boat starts to tip violently back and forth.
  - You are nearly thrown out of your seat!
  - You are thrown to the right!
  - You are thrown to the left! (Encourage your child to act this out while seated.)
  - Hang on tight! You hear the disciples say: “Jesus! Jesus! Wake up! We are about to sink!”
- Jesus wakes up.
  - He hears the thunder and sees the lightning.
  - He sees the frightened faces of his friends.
  - He sees the big waves and feels the boat tip one way and then the other.
  - He puts out his hand. “Peace! Be still!” he says. (Pause.)
- Everything is still.
  - The disciples are so thankful!
  - They go up, one by one, and say, “Thank you, Jesus.”
  - Now it is your turn to go up to Jesus. What will you say to Jesus? Say it quietly now in your heart. (Pause for a few moments.)
- Does Jesus say anything back to you in the quiet of your heart? (Pause for a few moments.)
- The boat is heading to shore now.
  - All is calm and peaceful.
  - The disciples look forward to another day with Jesus. And so do you!
  - You may open your eyes now and come back to land!

✚ **Child:** Share what you said to Jesus and what Jesus said to you.

**Parent:** Remind your child Jesus is always ready to help us when we are in trouble.

### **Process the Activity**

✚ **Child:** What did you feel as the storm raged?

✚ What was it like to be in the boat with Jesus and the disciples during the storm?

✚ How did you feel when Jesus said, "Peace. Be still?"

**Parent:** Using the following points explain Jesus knows us and loves us:

- Jesus cares about us. He knows when we are going through a hard time. He even knows all of our sins, even before we confess them in the Sacrament of Reconciliation!
- Even when we have made wrong choices, Jesus knows and, if we are sorry, he will bring us peace.

✚ **Child:** Draw a picture of a scene from this story in your Journey Book.

## **Additional Activity Option**

**A Split-Screen Picture (15 minutes)**

### **Materials Needed:**

Journey Book  
Crayons/colored pencils/markers

**Parent:** This activity is to draw a split-screen picture in their Journey Book using crayons, colored pencils or markers.

- ✚ **Child:** In your Journey Book, with a black crayon, draw a diagonal line across the page, from the bottom left-hand corner to the top righthand corner.
- ✚ Draw, on the upper left-hand side, a picture of the Gospel account of the storm at sea.  
(Examples: the boat, the sea, the lightning and the sky, Jesus asleep, or any other part of the Gospel story.)
- ✚ On the bottom right, draw yourself at a stormy time in your life.  
(Examples: going to a new school or a new house, having to admit to doing something wrong, or saying good-bye to a friend who is moving away.)
- ✚ After the drawing is finished, turn the page and write a prayer on the back. Sign your name to the prayer.  
(Example: "Dear Jesus, thank you for being with me when I came to my new school. Love, Lydia.)

## **Find** (30 minutes)

### **God's Treasure of Forgiveness**

**Parent:** Explain the meaning of today's story as follows:

- Jesus is the Son of God. He is with us in good times and in scary times. He is with us during storms, whether they are storms outside or even our storms inside, when we feel bad about what we have done.
- We are the disciples of Jesus. We are his close followers. He wants to take care of us and to save us, just as he saved the disciples in the storm.
- Link the story to the Sacrament of Reconciliation in these or similar words:
  - Jesus saves us by forgiving our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
    - After we confess our sins and are given a penance, we are given absolution, or forgiveness of our sins, through the words and actions of the priest.

- He extends either both hands or his right hand as he says the prayer of absolution.
  - We give thanks to God and then the priest sends us forth, saying this or another similar prayer: “The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace” (Rite of Penance).
- We give thanks to God, and then the priest sends us forth in peace.
- Pardon and peace are two great gifts of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
  - Just as Jesus calmed the storm, Jesus calms the storms in our lives and gives us peace.
  - We are given peace with ourselves, with God, and with others.
- Following are other gifts of the Sacrament of Reconciliation:
  - **Grace**, God’s own life in us. We grow closer to God and to all God’s people, the Church.
  - We are given a peaceful **conscience**.  
(Our **conscience** is the knowledge we have within us of right and wrong.)
  - We are given grace and strength to avoid sin and live as a Christian.
  - We are able to repair some of the harm done to our relationships that our sin caused.
  - We are helped to stay in friendship with God in this life so we can be happy with him forever in Heaven.
  - We are saved, if we have confessed a mortal sin, from being separated from God forever after we die.
  - We are more ready than ever to follow Jesus as his disciples!
- **Conclude by explaining that there are three things necessary for the Sacrament of Reconciliation to be complete:**  
(Have your child hold up their fingers with you as you repeat these three necessary actions.)
  - **(1) we must have true sorrow for our sins (contrition),**
  - **(2) we must promise not to sin again, and**
  - **(3) we must do our assigned penance.**
- ✚ **Child:** Turn to page 3 in the activity booklet and complete the activity.

(Answers: Across: 2. grace, 4. disciples, 6. sin; Down: 1. peace, 3. absolution, 5. life)

**Parent Note:** This content is presented in a child-friendly way in the God's Treasure of Forgiveness Student Booklet. You may wish to have your child read all or parts of Chapter 7 to supplement the lesson. Or use the concluding points under "Things to Remember" to wrap up the lesson before prayer.

## **Lesson Wrap-Up**

**Parent:** Invite your child to think back over all of the different things discussed in this lesson. Have your child share some of the key things they learned.

Ensure the following points are made:

- Jesus is the Son of God who is with us to save us in times of trouble.
- We are disciples of Jesus who call on him in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Our sins are forgiven and we are restored to peace when we receive absolution in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

 **Child:** Place the Chapter 7 sticker in the correct circle on your treasure map.

## Closing Prayer

**Together:** Begin with the Sign of the Cross. (Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)

- Pray the “Act of Contrition” using the copy at the end of the lesson

*My God,  
I am sorry for my sins with my whole heart.  
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,  
I have sinned against you  
whom I should love above all things.  
I firmly intend with your help,  
to do penance,  
to sin no more  
and avoid whatever  
leads me to sin.  
Amen*

- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

## Extra Activity

**Jesus Calms the Storm: A Video and Meditation (15 minutes)**

 **Child:** Watch “Jesus Calms the Storm,” available on YouTube (2:09)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzPwRXytr7U>

**Parent:** This account follows the longer version found in Mark 4:35–41.

- Discuss the following questions:
  - Because we are all baptized, we are all “in the same boat” with Jesus.  
**How do you feel to be in Jesus’ boat?**
  - When the disciples got into the boat, they did not yet know Jesus very well. **What did they ask at the end of the boat ride?**

("Who is this, even the wind and the waves obey him?")

- The disciples were slowly coming to realize something. **What were they slowly coming to realize?**

(That Jesus was God.)

- Remind the children that Jesus is God and is with us always and will always be with us when we are in trouble. Explain that Jesus is always ready to forgive us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**Parent:** Before gluing the activity booklet into the Journey Book, make sure to read over the Family Page.

**Please make sure you keep all your Reconciliation Journey Memories in your "Journey Book".**

**(The reconciliation activity book, the activities done for each lesson and any other memories you wish to include.)**