

Father Hans Eidenberger,

Homily of the final Liturgy of the 6th International Meeting of the MLC, February 1st, 2014

Gospel: Mk 4,35 - 41: The Storm on the Sea

((With some additions in double-brackets))

Dear friends in the Marianist Family, dear Sisters and Brothers!

I want to thank my Korean Brothers, especially Fr. Francis, for inviting me to give the homily. We have common bonds since Marianist from Austria were also working many years in South Korea.

Yes, we all form a family. The 4 branches reflect the reality of almost all states of life: religious – lay, male – female, young – old, all kinds of profession, ... many different states are part of our Marianist Family. In this regard we can say that we form the “United states of Chaminade”!

Coming to this meeting, all of us encountered different experiences regarding travelling. The Gospel today also talks about a travelling-experience. It is a boat ride.

What is a boat trip about? Well, to leave one shore in order to reach the other.

We are gathered now on the last day of our meeting at the shores of Lima and we are also about to leave this shore in order to set out for our “home-shores”: to the shores of our countries, but also to those of our communities and even to the shores of the hearts of the people we are living with.

We were travelling together during these days of our meeting; we also had somehow a Marianist boat ride. It seems to me that even the meeting room had the shape of a boat. Indeed, we were sitting in the same Marianist boat this week.

Now we have to move on. And we know: this transition will bring shaky moments and turbulences. Our trip seems to be even more challenging since we have to cross seas and oceans, whereas the disciples only had to get over this little lake of Galilee.

Well, we have a new International Team now with captain “Félix”. But I think you still can remember the words by Jack Ventura, and therefore I want to say: You can elect a new International Team, but you cannot control nature!

Storms will be part of our lives. We have to look how to master them.

Let’s have a look at the boat-ride of Jesus with his crew.

Be honest, what is your first impression about Jesus, sleeping on a cushion while the others are scare to death?

What’s happening here? Is Jesus staying in the comfort zone? (I’m sure, Pope Francis would not like that! See Evangelii Gaudium, # 20!)

The message, it seems to me, goes along this line: To sleep in the midst of the storm means, that one’s heart is anchored in something deeper than just the rocking boat; Jesus’ heart is anchored in God’s heart. The pillow is a symbol of his dwelling in God.

To be able to sleep is very important. Only to one who sleeps will have dreams! (Maybe we don’t have enough (daring) dreams because we don’t sleep enough?)

Now is the point where we shift from our “outer journey” to our “inner journey”!

We, too, have to wake Jesus from his sleep – and bring his dream of God into our lives. Any storm is an invitation to awaken Jesus in our (Marianist) boat!

We also have to make this journey from the “fear of the heart” to the “faith of the heart”.

A storm with its turbulences makes us lose our order; it somehow brings us “out of order”! Our lives lose the trustful inner order of belonging. And most of the time it is just a little bit that gets twisted around – like changing two letters in the word “sacred” and so ending up at “scared”.

Jesus invites us that our faith-journey becomes a journey from the “scared” to the “sacred”. That we move from the “fear of the heart” to the “faith of the heart”.

((Sometimes our vessel of the Marianist Family gets filled up with the water of fear. Remember the jars at the wedding of Cana. The water in those vessels was transformed into wine. I guess we should sometimes ask our Lord to change the water of fear into the wine of trust in the vessels of our Marianist journey.))

Regarding the faith of the heart let me talk about some “core-words”.

“Heart” means in Greek: “kardia” and in Latin: “cardia” or “cor”. This is the root for the French “coeur” or the Spanish “corason”.

These days many data (photos!) were saved on a memory stick. Of course, we want to keep record of important happenings.

Recording comes from the Latin: re-cor-dare

re: again // cor: heart // dare: to give

To re-cord something means, to take it a second time to your heart. I think, this is exactly what Mary did. She moved crucial events of her life once more in her heart. Faith is a cherishing attitude of giving things in life a second chance, a second / an-other place; allowing them to have not only a place in one’s head but also in one’s heart; to re-place the experiences of one’s life (from the head) to the heart.

If you want to remember important events of your journey with God: take them to heart - a second time. (I think that this comes very close to what Fr. Chaminade meant by “oraion” or “mental prayer”. The Mary-way of praying.)

((It is quite the same with re-spect: Respect means to give someone a second look – and not be satisfied with a first glance impression. Respect is a second look of appreciation.))

((You may think about the following by yourself:

- Learn by heart
- French: d’accord: I agree. I put my heart (to what you say).
- To believe means in Latin: credere, which comes from “cor dare”; to give one’s heart
- Miseri-cordias: a heart that feels miserable
- Think about how we understand to be “correct”. Perfect? Cor-rectus means: upright heart.
- And when we lose our heart, when it gets ruptured; then we are “cor-rupt”! Corruption is living without heart.
- de-cor-ation: to make beautiful because the it comes from the heart))

The head is, of course, important to reflect about our lives, but at the same time “thoughts are coward”. Courage comes from the heart! Courage is composed by two words: “cor” and “agere” – the core acts. The heart becomes the agent!

I believe when we come to the center of the faith of the heart we will encounter courage that moves us forward (till) to the hearts of the others.

((The heart is the place of giving love. Therefore: The beloved is also the believed. Like Fr. Chaminade said: We love what we believe. This dwells in the core of our being.))

Dear Sisters and Brothers!

Today is our day of the Magnificat (the theme of the day). Magi-ficare means: to make big! In Greek it says: mega-lalein! The Magnificat is so to say a mega-song!

Praising God means at the same time to make one's soul big and wide.

The Magnificat is Mary's song of magnifying both God and the little ones!

In order to make something great and big you need room and space for it.

Sometimes our soul is too small to allow God to become big in our lives.

Coming back to the gospel: The boat of our Marianist journey is sometimes too much filled up with fear. We need to create room for the faith of the heart.

Only then we can move on on our journey from the scared to the sacred.

For Fr. Chaminade the aspect of incarnation is essential for his perception of faith. It's not enough to think about our believe. We have to incarnate our faith into our body.

So I want to invite you to a little gesture that may accompany our inner attitude.

There are three couples: hope and space, prayer and hand, faith and heart.

Open, stretched out arms:

Give hope a space. Da un espacio a la esperanza. Donne une place a l'esperance.

Folded hands:

Give prayer a hand. Da una mano a la oración. Donne à la prière une main.

Hands on one's heart:

Give faith a heart. Da un corazón a la fe. Donne un cœur á la foi.

Dear Sisters and Brothers!

Every meeting has its end. So ours, too.

Tomorrow is "the day after"!

But tomorrow is also February 2nd, the day of consecrated life.

Con-secration means: to be with the sacred, to stick with God!

So let us stay in touch with the one who is at home in the heart of God in all storms – let us travel with Jesus.

May your Marianist journey be blessed by the one who leads from the shore of the "me" to the shore of the "you".

Amen.