

For years I have been fascinated by today's first reading. Elijah is told to "go outside and stand on the mountain.....the Lord will be passing by". Then there came a strong and heavy wind which was crashing rocks but God was not in the wind. Then there was an earthquake but God was not in the earthquake. Then there was fire but the Lords was not in the fire. Then there was a tiny whispering sound. There was God in that tiny whispering sound.

Then there is Peter walking on the water. He felt how strong the wind was. He became frightened and began to sink. Fear robbed him of his faith.

In his book "The Taste of New Wine" Keith Miller describes an event that changed his life. One night he was seriously hurt in a car accident. He lay on the side of the road an hour and a half waiting for an ambulance. Fully conscious he began to pray. As he prayed there in the darkness a remarkable feeling of peace overwhelmed him.

I believe we are all seeking this feeling of peace, the tiny whispering sound. But of course there are obstacles. There is the fear like the fear St. Peter experienced.

Have you noticed how infrequently we experience a sense of inner peace. Our minds are plagued with angers and hurts and resentments, even with disturbing memories from childhood with shame and doubt and worries. Our minds never stop. So much is negative. Even at night our minds are busy. Buddhists call this the monkey mind. In AA they call it 'stinkinthinkin'. Jesus is saying to us why are you fearful.

But it is possible to enter into this peace in our own lives, to hear the tiny whispering sound. But it takes work. I'm talking about contemplation. I'm talking about prayer. Not the kind of prayer where we do all the talking. Scripture say "Be still, be quiet and know that I Am God'.

This kind of prayer takes time. It takes work. The work of quieting down and listening to the silence. If you can turn the water on, you can do it. If you can breathe, you can do it.

Sit silently, listen to the quiet. Let your mind torment you and then let it fade away. Call on God. Listen to your breathing. Use a simple prayer word. Make a retreat. Find someone who can support you.

Speak directly to Jesus as you receive Him into your body in the Eucharist. Jesus is there in the tiny whispering sound.