

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, May 7th 2011**

After an exhausting day teaching and feeding the 5,000 Jesus had sent the disciples on ahead to cross the lake by boat, while he had gone to the hills to pray and escape from the crowds who wanted to make him king. Probably, Jesus intended to walk around the lake and meet them as they came to Capernaum. Storms often arise unexpectedly on the lake of Tiberias, but if the disciples had been rowing for three or four miles they would not have been far from the shore. Jesus seems to have been watching them and seeing that the going was rough he hurried round to be with them. Some translations say that Jesus came to them, 'walking on the water', but translated from the Greek, the words are: 'Jesus was walking by the seashore'. The wonder of this account is not that Jesus was walking on the water, this could have been a trick of the late evening light, but that he was aware that they were tired and that they needed his friendship. 'It is I, do not be afraid,' Jesus said to them. They would have remembered those words, not least after the resurrection when they had been fishing all night and caught nothing and there was Jesus on the shore, cooking their breakfast. At all times, but especially in times of trouble and doubt and difficulty, we may be sure that Jesus is looking out for us, whispering, or perhaps even shouting so that we will hear: 'It is I, do not be afraid.'

Sr. Anne McCarthy, rscj