The Witching Hour

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In Matthew 14:22-27, Matthew tells us that the disciples were struggling against the waves throughout the night as they attempted to cross the Sea of Galilee. Yet at the 4th watch of the night, Jesus came to them walking on the water. They thought He was a ghost, and who would disagree? People don't walk on water! Yet Jesus declared, "Cheer up, it's me, don't be afraid!" Matthew 14:27)

The 4th watch of the night, 3am, has been claimed by many different cultures as the witching or devil's hour. It's the deepest part of the night before dawn. Many superstitions claim that evil lurks especially at this time. Perhaps you know the terrors of waking up at this time with the weight of the world on your mind and even a sense of dread. People used to pray with great seriousness before they went to bed. After all, it's dark, and you are completely vulnerable! Of course, maybe you feel that now.

So it shouldn't surprise us that Jesus arrived when the disciples were at their lowest point. Because even at our lowest point, there is Jesus! When we are overcome with guilt and feel alone, there's Jesus. When we feel helpless before the challenges of daily living, there's Jesus. When we are lying in the hospital bed or even in the grave, there's Jesus. He always shows up. In fact, He has already been there! He makes these places and moments safe. He says to us, "Cheer up, it's me; do not be afraid!" He has hung on our cross. He has lain in our grave. Jesus rose from the dead on the 4th watch of the night after all! He owns the witching hour even!

In baptism, He bound Himself to you. So that even in your darkest moments, He is there. Even if He has to walk on water or rise from the dead. He is not bound by the 'laws' of physics. He is their author. But more wonderfully, He is your savior, your brother, your friend, your God.

What is your witching hour? What are you haunted by? Christ is with you. Do not be afraid. You are forgiven. You will rise again. You will get to the other side.