



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 9, 2026

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Greetings of peace, love, joy, and hope!

“From Self-Reliance to Sacred Trust”

When difficult situations arise, our first instinct is often to tighten our grip on life. We convince ourselves that if we just try harder, think smarter, or push harder, we can control every outcome. We believe we have the power to stop nature's course, bend the world to our will, and secure our future through science, technology, and human ingenuity. While these gifts can accomplish great good, they can also tempt us to forget our limits and even our need for God.

From the beginning, God's design for creation was marked by purpose, order, and direction. Everything was meant to flow from His wisdom and return to His glory. But humanity has gone so far in its pursuit of self-reliance that we have lost focus on Jesus. We have placed our trust in our own abilities, systems, and strength. And like Peter on the stormy sea, when we rely only on ourselves, life begins to sink. Without seeking His divine power, death becomes inevitable, not only physical death, but the slow spiritual death that comes from living without God at the center.

Peter's moment in the water is our moment too. He stepped out in faith, but fear overtook him. The wind was strong, the waves were high, and his confidence collapsed. Yet as he began to sink, Peter did the one thing that saved him. He looked back to Jesus. He cried out for help, and Jesus immediately reached out His hand. Peter's life was saved, and his focus was restored, not on the storm, but on his Master and Savior.

We face so many storms in life. Some come suddenly, and others build slowly over time. They can overwhelm us, blind us, and shake our hope for a brighter future. The storms of our world, like violence, division, economic instability, and moral confusion, leave many feeling lost. The storms in our personal lives, like illness, grief, broken relationships, loneliness, and anxiety, can make us feel as if we are drowning.

Our world needs to refocus on Jesus. Our leaders need to refocus on Jesus. Our families, our communities, and each of us need to refocus on Jesus. His ways, His teachings, and His unconditional love and mercy are not outdated ideals, but they are the only compass capable of guiding us through the chaos of our time. He is our Way, our Truth, and our Life. Only He can lead us to peace the world cannot give, and fulfillment no human achievement can produce.

The storms of life will always be present. Jesus never promised a life without waves. But He did promise that we would never face them alone. Every storm becomes an awakening, a call to trust more deeply, surrender more fully, and fix our eyes more firmly on Him. Through the eyes of faith, we hold fast to the belief that He speaks to us, reaches for us, and calls us to Himself.

When we fix our gaze on Jesus, we discover that the storm does not have the final word. He does. His hand is already extended. His voice is already calling. His presence is already near. He is with us here, and He will be with us in the life to come.

Your Friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual