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## The fourth man

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.B.

When we visited Antarctica we heard the story of Ernest Shackleton, who in 1914 sailed to Antarctica with a crew of 27. Their ship was crushed in the pack ice, but Shackleton succeeded in evacuating his men to the remote Elephant Island. But no ships ever came there. So he took five others and set out on an epic journey 800 miles across the raging sea to make a pinpoint landing at their desired destination of South Georgia Island. But the whaling station was on the other side of the island and the only way across was an uncharted mountain range. Shackleton then took two companions and in 36 hours crossed the mountains and arrived safely at the whaling station. All of his men were subsequently rescued. Shackleton later wrote in his memoirs, "I have no doubt that Providence guided us, not only across the snowfields, but across the storm-white sea that separated Elephant Island from our landing place on South Georgia. I know that during that long and racking march of thirty-six hours over the unnamed mountains and glaciers of South Georgia, it seemed to me often that we were four, not three." His two companions independently mentioned the same feeling. There was a fourth man walking with them. The fourth man was how it was reported in the newspapers. To me, the fourth man is Christ. Christ, the divine idea coming to save, to guide and to heal. Christ, the Son of God, is the fourth man present to walk with you. Christ is present to talk with you, to guide you through every trial and tribulation. No matter how difficult the situation, no matter how hopeless it appears, there is hope. Christ is present to help you just as certainly as Christ helped Shackleton. So today why not turn to God and feel the fourth man walking with you, taking you all the way to healing and safety.