

Reflection



I can recall when I was a kid , maybe about 10 years old, my parents used to go to church every Wednesday and Sunday for evening services.

On those days, I was at home on my own most of the time, between 6-8pm for about 2 hours, I was alone at

home.

As a kid, I felt a bit scared being at home by myself. Especially, when it was windy or when it was a rainy day, I could hear the windows shaking and I felt really scared. In dark nights, I was afraid a stranger might turn up and something might happen to me. I wished that 8 o'clock comes soon, so my parents would be home by then. I really hated and being at home by myself.

Sometimes, my parents didn't come home until 8 pm without any notice. They got caught in the conversations with the church people, or an unscheduled meeting that came up after the service and they would be late. At that time, there were no mobile phones so, I couldn't call them or anything.

When they were late, I felt terrified, I could not do anything. I just sat on the couch and looked at the clock. Sometimes, I cried out in fear.

And when I heard the door opening, I would run to the door to my parents. We all have different experiences, but I'm sure most of us have experienced some kind of fear in life.

Today's gospel reading is another familiar story - where Jesus comes to the disciples, in the middle of a storm, walking on the water.

In this reading, we can see that the disciples cried out in fear.

They were on a boat, waiting for Jesus. It was a very dark night.

They were in the middle of some rough seas, the wind was against them and the waves were battering the boat. In the big waves and strong wind, they saw a figure out on the water. They were terrified. Peter needed to check it out - “if it is you Jesus, command me to come to you on the water”.

So, Jesus invited him, “Come”.

Suddenly, Peter had forgotten his fear, and was no longer bothered by the waves and the wind, he just wanted to get to Jesus.

He got out of the boat and started to walk towards Jesus. All good!

But then, Peter realised what was happening, he heard again the sound of the wind and felt the wind and waves around him, his fear took over and he started to sink. As he cried out to Jesus, Jesus reached out to him and lifted him out of the depths to which he had sunk.

And Jesus said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”

From this passage of the Gospel;

we see the disciples in the storm, on the shaking boat, struggling with the big waves and wind, just like us in life, anxious and afraid of what is in front of us.

This bible passage also gives us some questions.

When the troubles of life surround us, what do we do?

What is your response in these situations?

When Jesus come to us and ask us to come on the water, what would you do?

Are we ready to get out of the boat?

Or, are you holding the boat and waiting until the waves and the wind calm down?

The whole world is suffering and is scared due to the Pandemic these days and the church is not an exception either. We are all impacted by it financially, mentally, physically and spiritually.

The Pandemic is going to last much longer than we expected, and we don't know how long this will go on, and many of us are tired and exhausted from what we have been through.

In this time of restrictions, the isolation and the lockdown are a storming time for us. We are sad because we have to miss out many joys of our life due to all of these restrictions.

The church is not able to gather for worship. Its buildings remain mostly empty. We can't share the Holy Communion physically, we can't have fellowship in the church, frontier services BBQ, singing hymns in the church, celebrate baptism, mission activities, this year we have missed out on so many things. And we are very limited to do anything much.

But here is the good news that we are not alone in this storm, Jesus is with us and calls us and holds us and saves us. We are in God's hands.

In the dark night of fear and helplessness, Jesus came to the disciples in the very midst of the storm. He did not take the disciples out of their storm; he entered their storm. our Lord Christ, comes to us, walking on the water, through the wind, and in the darkness. Jesus' peace, words of comfort, and presence are with us, and He calls us to come, step out of the boat and walk to him on the water.

Even though we are not able to do the normal church worship and gathering, now is the time for the church to get out of the boat and be the church and look for what we can do in this situation.

Where Jesus leads us, there will be light in the darkness, help us seek and find new things that we can do, and find new ways that we can take.

We do not stay in fear, but we should step out of fear.

This journey might be long and not easy.

The wind may be against us and the waves may be tossing us around, but our faith says that Jesus is walking with us even in the storm.

And Jesus assures us, “Do not be afraid, I am with you.”

The wind will not stop us from following the mission that Jesus has sent us on.

The waves will not sink the boat.

With Jesus, we can fight against what we are faced now.

This is faith that drives us on. That is the story of Jesus walking on the sea.

So friends, let's keep our eyes on Jesus instead of the wind.

To build our courage to offer love and care for those in need.

Keep our eyes on Jesus, not just to welcome Jesus as the way to calm the storm and allow the boat to reach safely. But have faith to step out of the boat.

No matter how strong the wind blows, it is the wind through which Jesus walks to us.

No matter how dark the night, it is the night in which Jesus comes to us.

No matter how great our fear, it is the fear that Christ has already walked on and defeated.

“Take heart, I am with you, do not be afraid.”