

Thought for the day 22<sup>nd</sup> July with Caroline Barratt, Lay Family & Young Person's Worker (for Kettering & Corby Meth. Circuit).

Step out in Faith

### **Jesus Walks on Water, Matthew 14 vs 12-22**

22 Immediately after the feeding of the 5000, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. 23 After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone.

24 Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. 25 About three o'clock in the morning<sup>[a]</sup> Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!"

27 But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!<sup>[a]</sup>"

28 Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water."

29 "Yes, come," Jesus said.

So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the strong<sup>[a]</sup> wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted.

31 Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?"

32 When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. 33 Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God! They exclaimed.

We can all identify with how the disciples were feeling as they faced the crisis of being tossed about by the roaring waves, they felt abandoned and isolated from Jesus who was praying quietly on the safety of the land. But this particular passage is holds a valuable religious reminder that we should not give way to despair, for Christ will come to us during those fearful times. We can also learn so much from Peter who dared to move out of the boat across the water towards Jesus, he showed great

courage and Faith in Jesus even in his time of distress. Sometimes we are like the disciples, we are not without faith, but we could certainly do with more.

Normally at this time of year, I would have spent most of my days over the last weeks working in schools, leading assemblies and prayer spaces based on Moving on and helping young people to think about the changes they are facing as they move into a new class or a year group at the end of the school term. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic my role has been furloughed. The message that I would have shared would be that every year we grow and change and things around us change too, we have to leave behind the things we know and take a step into the unknown. This can make us feel nervous or unsure, but it can also be exciting.

There is a well known saying "Life is a journey" The definition of a journey in the oxford dictionary is an act of travelling from one place to another. To experience new opportunities on our journeys we sometimes have to leave our comfortable safe surroundings and try new brave ways. This is what Peter did in the passage from Matthew.

Peter steps out from the familiarity of the boat, the place of his expertise and experience, onto the stormy seas. He moves into unknown territory, a place he has not been before. He confronts the powers of nature. Why does he do it? He does it because he has seen Jesus and Jesus has given him the courage and the confidence to move from what he knows to what he does not know, to journey in faith. The lesson that we can learn from this story is that we may not always know what is going to happen next in our lives and we may have times of despair, but if we keep our eyes firmly focused on Jesus like Peter did then he will protect and support us and give us the faith and courage to face our fears.

Let us pray

Lord Jesus, you stilled the storm on the lake, still the storms in our hearts, our communities, and our world. Peter was filled with fear, but he went on to take more risks when you commanded. Help us to be like Peter and to take risks and step out in faith when you call us. Amen