

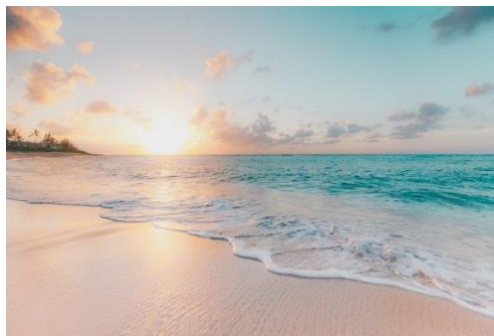
Thought for the day – Tuesday 5th May

Last week, as we were tucking into our dinner of fish and chips, my husband commented that he really wished he could be eating fish and chips at the seaside.

Even though we don't live by the sea, we love having the opportunity to travel to the coast – I still get that childish excitement at the first glimpse of the sea like I'm seeing it for the first time.

This started me thinking about the unpredictability of the sea:

Often it can be calm and the gentle lapping of the water evokes peace and contentment.



Sometimes, it appears impatient as the tide rushes in and sends holiday makers running.



At other times, it is turbulent and tempestuous – waves crashing on rocks and threatening lives.



Our lives can often mirror the different 'moods' of the sea. There are times when everything seems calm and peaceful. We are happy in our jobs, we find time to enjoy our hobbies, family and friends. Some of us may have times of impatience and feel the need to rush to reach an end goal which can lead to not having enough time for others, and finally, there may be times when we feel in the middle of a dark and menacing storm where the waves threaten to overwhelm us. The current situation we are all living in at the moment may be one of those times and I am in no doubt that all of us are feeling unsettled, worried or frightened to some extent and are wondering when the storm will pass.

I am sure this was how the disciples felt when they faced a storm on Lake Galilee:

³⁵On the evening of that same day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." ³⁶So they left the crowd; the disciples got into the boat in which Jesus was already sitting, and they took him with them. Other boats were there too. ³⁷Suddenly a strong wind blew up, and the waves began to spill over into the boat, so that it was about to fill with water. ³⁸Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping with his head on a pillow. The disciples woke him up and said, "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to die?"

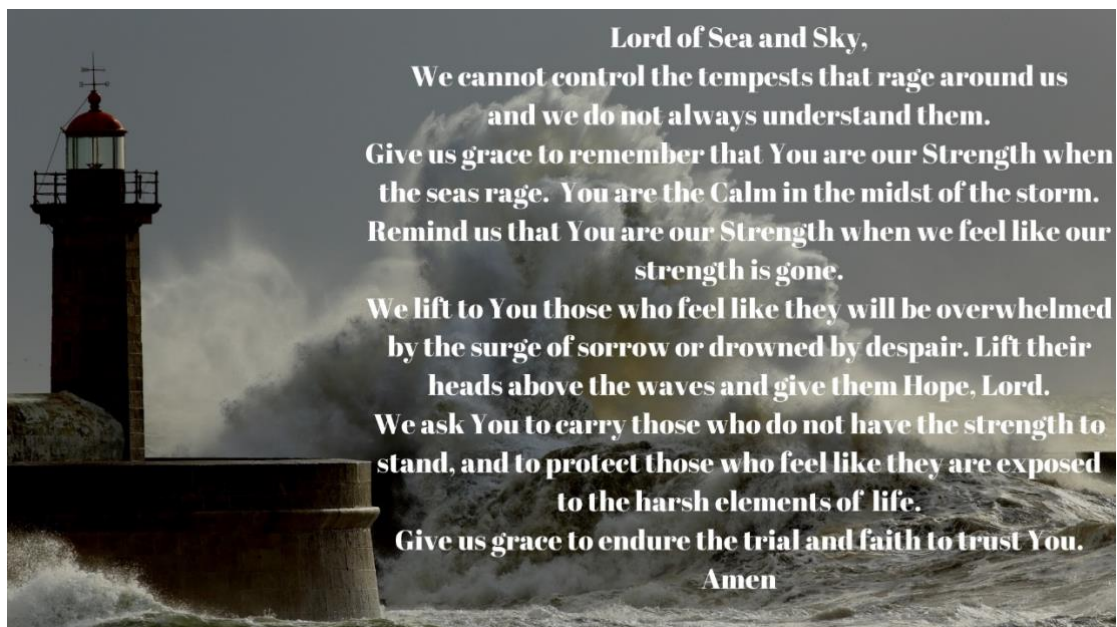
³⁹Jesus stood up and commanded the wind, "Be quiet!" and he said to the waves, "Be still!" The wind died down, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Why are you frightened? Do you still have no faith?"

⁴¹But they were terribly afraid and began to say to one another, "Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Mark 4:35-41 (GNT)

Let us remember that whenever we face a storm in our lives, we do not face it alone: Jesus is always with us and will be there to calm the storm.

Let us pray:



Singing the Faith 241: This hymn may not be familiar to you all (it was new to me) but I was struck by the words 'When we were in the stormy gale, and wondered if we'd ever live in peace again, you were there, Lord.' You can listen to it at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F35_DOzX9dA

When we were in the darkest night
And wondered if our eyes would ever see the light

You were there Lord
When we were in the stormy gale
And wondered if we'd ever live in peace again
You were there Lord
You were there in the struggle
You were there in the fight
You were there all the time

*We praise You, the God of yesterdays
We praise You, the God who is here today
We praise You, our God as tomorrow comes*

And whatever lies ahead
Whatever road our grateful hearts will come to tread
You'll be there Lord
We will fix our eyes on You
And know that there is grace enough to see us through
You'll be there Lord
You'll be there in the struggle
You'll be there in the fight
You'll be there all the time

*We praise You, the God of yesterdays
We praise You, the God who is here today
We praise You, our God as tomorrow comes
We thank You for grace in our yesterdays
We thank You for peace in our hearts today
We thank You our joy as tomorrow comes
We will trust God*

You're always closer than we know
Always more involved and in control
We will trust our lives to You
The one who was and is to come

*We praise You, the God of yesterdays
We praise You, the God who is here today
We praise You, our God as tomorrow comes
We thank You for grace in our yesterdays
We thank You for peace in our hearts today
We thank You our joy as tomorrow comes
We will trust God*