

Homily. 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year.A. 27/28 June 2020.

Over the past few months we've heard more often than most of us care to remember the phrase 'we're all in this together' or the variant 'we're all in the same boat'. As I see it we are all in this global pandemic and health emergency storm together, but we certainly aren't all in the same boat. A simple look at what's happening here in Australia compared to what's happening in other places in the world justifies this distinction; same storm, yes; different boats, most certainly.

When it comes to our life and witness in our Church this changes in an important way because no matter what happens, good or bad, we are all together in the one boat, designed and Captained by Jesus, built by the apostles and kept afloat, seaworthy and pointed in the right direction by the talents and faith of every one of us. St. Paul makes this point in our 2nd reading, telling us that our common and equal Baptism is into Christ, and that this Baptism of ours is into His death and resurrection. It makes no difference, then, if we're powerful and popular or powerless and forgotten, if we're the Pope, some little known Priest or vowed religious or a person alone and silent in a nursing home; all of us are one in Christ and the pattern He laid out, the design He drew with His life, death and resurrection is ours, too.

As one pilgrim people we all share a common life in Christ, living His life in the one ship, our Church. With the important Church Governance Report 'The light of the Southern Cross' being recently given to the Australian Bishop's, due for public release and discussion in late July or early August of this year, and the revised Plenary Council dates now

locked in for October 2021 in Adelaide and June 2022 in Sydney, we have some valuable opportunities emerging to continue to shape the future of our ship and its crew. The conversation on these matters needs to be firmly centred on Christ and the life we have in Him, a life that begets of distinctions amongst us, but never of any superiority over or manipulation of any of us. Transparency is crucial to the success of this discussion, which is the freedom to share in Church process and decisions much as we wish, or at least to know about and understand them.

Such freedom to know, understand and participate more fully in our Church community is what welcoming prophets and disciples in the Lord's name means, respecting the distinct gifts and roles each of us has to play. Thinking and acting like this takes the Opening Prayer of our Mass seriously, giving flesh and blood to its bones, because knowing and participating more fully and deeply admits that the One God has gifted all of us with adoption into God's family, into Christ's crew on the boat we're in no matter the weather. It will mean that, as we prayed, we can help each other to stand in the bright sunlight of God's truth, better avoiding the stormy darkness of error, and all of this so that we can bear the fruit in our world for which Christ died, rose and has made us His own.