

Homily. 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year.A. 8/9 August 2020.

I forget when now, as time moves quickly with so much is happening every day, but I spoke to you about the phrase; we're all in this together. I said back then that we are all in the same Covid 19 storm together, but we certainly aren't all in the same boat, pointing out how well we were doing here in Australia compared to so many places overseas.

Well, like I said earlier, time moves on. Now we have to see ourselves in Queensland beside Victoria as well as all of those battling heavy weather across the world. When I first pointed this out to you I added that, when it comes to the Church, our communities of faith and service here and across the world, an important distinction has to be made, namely that we are all together in the same boat of Christ, for better and for worse.

After the feeding of the multitude the disciples were sent away by Jesus in the one boat, an ancient symbol of the Church, while He would go alone into the hills for a night of prayer and solitude. In the early hours of the morning around 2am, they hadn't travelled far despite all of their hard work. They were caught in stormy, windy weather and a choppy sea, everything running against them. Many of them were fishermen used to sailing the Sea of Galilee, but they were going nowhere despite their best work and hard won experience.

What a shock it must have been for them, tired and frustrated as they were, to see this figure almost gliding across the waves, such a shock that they thought it was a ghost and screamed out in fear.

In the midst of all of this drama the figure called out to them with the famous words; Courage! It is I ! Do not be afraid. As usual it was Peter

who spoke up, adding if it really was Jesus then He should tell him to get out of the boat and walk across the waves towards the Him. This is exactly what Jesus did. In what was a great leap of faith Peter got out of the boat and began to do as Jesus was, walk across the angry sea. Everything was going well as long as Peter kept his focus, his eyes, mind and heart firmly fixed on Jesus. It was only when he felt the full force of the wind, turning inwards and focusing on his fears, that he began to sink.

Of all that could have happened next, Peter made the right choice. He immediately called out for help, for salvation. Jesus instantly responded lifting him up, getting him back into the boat with the community and bringing calm to the chaos and peace to their panic.

In the storm of this pandemic, fear about the future of everything affecting everybody, we believers are all in the same boat together, our Church. But, we're not going to make it across this wild sea we must traverse unless we keep our eyes peeled for Jesus. He is not panicking, nor is He caught up in chaos. He is present, walking towards us through all of this mess, peacefully gliding over the deadly waves. His message remains the same; Courage! It is I ! Do not be afraid. If we have the faith of Peter we'll be invited to step out and focusing on Him walk safely over the waves. With so much uncertainty and disintegration around us let's keep our focus on our Lord, calling for His salvation, feeling His peace in our panic and His calm in our heart of our chaos until we meet the Son of God.