

Wednesday 12th August 2020

Opening Prayer

In the beginning before time, before people, before the world began,
GOD WAS

Here and now, among us, beside us, within us, enlisting us, the people of
earth, for the purposes of heaven,
GOD IS.

In the future, and when we have run this mortal life and we finally know the
fulfilment of God's plan for ourselves.
GOD WILL BE.

Not denying the world, but delighting in it, not condemning the world, but
redeeming it through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit,
GOD WAS, GOD IS, GOD WILL BE. AMEN

StF 41 As we are gathered, Jesus is here;

As we are gathered, Jesus is here;
One with each other, Jesus is here;
joined by the spirit, washed in the blood,
part of the body, the church of God.
As we are gathered, Jesus is here;
One with each other, Jesus is here;

Reading: Matthew 14 verses 22 – 33 Jesus Walks on the Water.

[The appointed Gospel lesson for Sunday 9th August]

22 Jesus immediately had the disciples get into a boat and cross to the other side ahead of him, while he sent the crowds away. 23 After dismissing the crowds, he went up on a hillside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone. 24 By this time the boat was in the middle of the sea and was being battered by the waves, because the wind was against them. 25 Shortly before dawn Jesus came to them, walking on the sea. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified and cried out, "It's a ghost!" And they screamed in terror. 27 "Have courage!" Jesus immediately told them. "It's me. Stop being afraid!" 28 Peter answered him, "Lord, if it's you, order me to come to you on the water." 29 Jesus said, "Come on!" So Peter got down out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came to Jesus. 30 But when he noticed the strong wind, he was frightened. As he began to sink, he shouted, "Lord, save me!" 31 At once Jesus reached out his hand, caught him, and asked him, "You who have so little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 **As they got into the boat, the wind stopped blowing.** 33 Then the men in the boat began to worship Jesus, saying, "You certainly are the Son of God!"

Extract from the sermon I delivered last Sunday at St Margaret's

I am indebted to William Barclay's commentary for the following:

'St Francis of Sales writes in one of his letters.

I often noticed that a girl servant having filled her water bucket to the brim, would, before picking it up to carry it home place a piece of wood on top of the water. When I asked her why, she replied, "Why, to keep the water steady so it will not spill.

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Barclay also records that a Bishop writing to a friend related this story and added, "So when your heart is distressed and agitated, put the Cross into its centre to keep it steady, in every time of storm and stress, the presence of Jesus brings serenity and calm.'

The picture of the young girl placing a piece of wood on the water in her bucket to stopping it spilling can offer us the hope that remembering to have Jesus Christ at the centre of our turbulent lives is both reassuring and encouraging. But it struck me that just as the girl still had to carry the bucket home, so we have to, in trust and faith continue our faith journeys together through times of doubt and challenge, and we will sometimes be finding ourselves echoing the words of the man appealing to Jesus to help his sick son, "Lord, we believe; help our unbelief. Amen.

The following hymn by Nick Fawcett is from St Margaret's Hymn Book Hymns Old and New and I wish it was in ours. It Can be sung to the tune of 'For the beauty of the earth'

For the days when you feel near,

For the days when you feel near,
for the times when all is clear;
when your presence seems so real,
for the blessing of such days,
Lord, accept our grateful praise.

For the times when you feel far,
When we wonder where you are:
When we call and call again,
But our pray'rs appear in vain –
When it seems you just don't care,
Lord, assure us you're still there.

For the truth that day by day
You are present, come what may;
When we see you, when we don't
When we trust you, when we won't
For the peace such love imparts,
Lord we come with grateful hearts.

Nick Fawcett CCLi. No.287592

Closing Prayer

Let go into the world with confidence that God care for each of us.
Let us go with joy in the knowledge that Jesus shared our experiences of life.
Let us go in the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us. Amen