

Service for Week 27th July- 2nd August

2026 By Chaplain Andy

Our Opening Prayer.

Living God, you invite us to talk to you in prayer. Teach us not only to speak but also to listen, not simply to cry out for help when we need it. Help us to build our relationship with you through Jesus Christ by sharing both the ups and downs of our lives. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven.....

Amen

Bible Reading Matthew 14 :22-33

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Our text today is the very dramatic account of when Jesus walked on the water on the sea of Galilee. It was a demonstration by Jesus that after healing the sick and bringing the dead back to life that not only he held power over the physical he could also command nature by being able to walk on water without sinking or drowning.

Even those who have never been in the sea, lakes, swimming pools or even in a bath! - will know how impossible this is - to actually walk on water without sinking. People have told me that things like that, which Jesus did that we call his miracles, are really hard to believe. Yes, they are hard to believe because they go against all the laws of nature as we know them.

But we know that disciples, those that had been called to follow Jesus and spread his teachings found it very hard to believe that Jesus was who he said he was- from God, the Son of God and

of God. If Jesus was physically here with us now and performed 'miracles' many would say whatever Jesus did was a trick and all a clever deception. The disciples were equally untrusting as when earlier in Matthew's gospel when Jesus calms a storm on the sea of Galilee he asks his frightened disciples, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?"

The miracles that Jesus did were however not just for show, acts like healing the blind man and bringing Lazarus back from the dead came about through Jesus' deep compassion for those he met and those who were brought to him for healing. There was also the opportunity for Jesus to incorporate his teaching for the disciples and those that witnessed the miracles.

There must have been many events in the life of Jesus that were not written about in the gospels by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John who have been called the four evangelists. So, the events that were recorded by some and especially all the gospel writers would have been written down because they felt contain a powerful message from Jesus' teachings.

In our text today we read that the disciples are terrified to see Jesus approaching them in their boat by walking across the sea. How can this be, it must be a ghost they think. But

in their unbelief Peter offers a challenge. He says if you are of God and you really are walking on water then tell me to get out of this boat and walk towards you. Peter starts out but as we read, he starts having doubts and that is when he finds he is sinking into the water, and cries out – 'save me' Then Jesus stretches out and catches him.

There are times in life when we have doubts like Peter. Doubts about if Jesus really is of God and if we should believe his teachings. Doubts about whether we are able to cope with a difficult situation we may be in, be it a physical problem or an emotional or mental health issue we are facing.

When such doubts come to you, and you feel yourselves sinking like Peter, sinking down and getting very scared that things will overwhelm you, then is the time to talk to God. To share with God what is happening and to share your feelings.

When you do this and put your trust in God, as I have found, he will hold out his arms and catch you. **Amen**

Closing prayer

Loving God, I thank you that you are a God who listens and responds. Save me from a lack of trust that frustrates your purpose, and closes my mind to your love. May I have a heart that truly believes, through Jesus Christ my Lord.

Amen

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett