Reflection Saturday 9th January 2021

St John writes *"God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him."* However imperfect our love may be, God still lives in us and so does his love. We struggle to allow that love to take over our lives because we hate to give up control. Yet, love infiltrates everything we do in our relationship with God, with others and with our world. We give that love other names, like a welcome greeting, a smile of recognition, a gentle hand of support, giving food to the hungry, sitting with someone, support and help offered, being present with others, singing, laughing, conversing and many more. It is love that inspires and urges us to be more loving because, for many of us, our love is not perfect. In the Gospel, note first that Jesus took time off to pray, to spend time with his Father. Prayer is also where we need to begin. Although Mark is never complementary about the disciples, by telling us that they failed to understand he allows us to identify more closely with them. It also poses the question of what Mark would have written about us?? We can marvel at the fact that Jesus was able to walk across the water but more pertinent is the fact that Jesus saw that his disciples were struggling against the wind and not making headway and went to help them. So, when we are up against it and making no headway, be assured that Jesus will come to our help too. Pope Francis adds this: *The boat, at the mercy of the storm, is an image of the Church which, in every age, encounters headwinds and very harsh trials: we note certain long and ferocious persecutions both in the last century and today. In situations like that, she may be tempted to think that God has abandoned her. But, in reality, it is precisely in those moments that* **the witness of faith, the witness of love, the witness of hope shines out the most!!**

A zookeeper lost a pair of mongoose during a storm and wanted to replace them. He began writing an email to his supplier… *"Dear sir, please send me two mongooses at once."* That didn't sound right, so he tried again. *"Dear sir, please send me two mongeese at once."* That still didn't sound right, so he made one last attempt: *"Dear sir, please send me one mongoose. And while you're at it – please send me another mongoose as well!"*