

WEEK 5 OF LENT YEAR A

"WHY ARE YOU AFRAID? HAVE YOU NO FAITH?"



NOTICES

LIVE STREAMING OF MASSES - Fr David from this weekend will begin live streaming mass at 8pm on Saturday night, and at 11am on Sunday mornings. This will be done using Youtube; Fr David will publish on the night before the web address which you need to click on to access the live mass.

SICK AND HOUSEBOUND - if you know anyone in desperate need of the sacraments, because of sickness, or you wish for someone to be prayed for, please be in touch by phone or e mail with Fr David.

MASS INTENTIONS - during this time Fr David and Fr Gary continue to celebrate masses for you intentions each day, for an end to this crisis.

VATICAN WEBSITE - please during this time keep in touch with what the Pope is saying, for live messages it is best to go to the EWTN website ewtn.com because it is translated into English; for written messages go to the Vatican website vatican.va.

YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER SAYS – TRUST ME! I AM WITH YOU !

Mark 4: 35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." ³⁶ And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. ³⁷ And a great storm of wind arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. ³⁸ But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?" ³⁹ And he awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ He said to them, "**Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?**" ⁴¹ And they were filled with awe, and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?"

Pope Francis yesterday (Friday) gave a powerful reflection on this gospel which perfectly describes our current situation. Read it, it's a must, Fr David has posted it on the parish website.

The sea of Galilee, is a unique sea, it is also called Gennesaret which means the Garden Lake, because it is fruitful, in contrast to the Dead Sea, and responsible for sustaining so many people, in Jesus' time and today: fishermen, farmers etc.. It is surrounded by mountains and valleys which converge into it, these valleys act as wind tunnels which multiply the force and speed of any wind rapidly.

One moment on this lake, all can be quiet and serene, like life, everything seems calm and sorted, organised and in its right place, we feel in control; then the wind comes, and because the lake is so shallow, the sea quickly turns into a maelstrom of mountainous waves which can easily sink a boat. Our vulnerability is exposed!

Mark's gospel records one such storm. In a category 5 hurricane, with the boat he was in, at sinking point, with a crew which was in a full panic expecting to drown at any moment, Jesus is found sleeping - having a siesta - in the back of the boat unperturbed at what is going on; comfortable and relaxing - at peace. To live the current crisis in the world, we need to discover the secret of Jesus's peace, his rest. Why could he find peace, when everyone else was dying of fright? He even asks the strangest of all questions, "why are you afraid?" Was it not obvious, with death by drowning a moment away.

Jesus in the Gospel, particularly in the gospel of John, speaks plainly about his Father, the whole axis of this life is not centred on himself, but on his Father, he lived with a passion and thirst to see his Father glorified; glorified means to be known, loved and served. Jesus says that his works he learnt from his Father; his words are not his own

but from his Father; he comes not to do his own will, but the will of his Father.

Just as the apostle John rested his head in Jesus' heart and penetrated his secrets, and was sustained by the knowledge of God's love he found there, which was why he was the only apostle able to sustain the scandal of the cross of Good Friday and not run away; Jesus is the one who uniquely, from all eternity, has laid his head in the heart of the Father, and knows his every heartbeat. Lying in the boat in the storm Jesus is not flummoxed by the externals but continues to rest in the bosom of his Father; he will do likewise on the cross, entering it as the Son of a loving Abba.

Jesus began this journey with a **call 'to cross to the other side'**. Not just a physical journey, but a journey of faith, in which the apostles will be able to reach the other side, to be able to address the Father as Abba, because they too like Jesus enjoy an intimacy with Jesus' Father. In reaching this place too they find that the storms and the winds of persecution serve rather to build them up, and not destroy them. This is fulfilled at Pentecost.

The Pope in his Urbi et Orbi address yesterday makes it clear that this is the deeper meaning of the Covid19 crisis, a universal storm which calls on everyone to make the same journey that the apostles made. What do we have to do? We need to take up the authority we have from Christ, and renounce the False Father. The Father of lies who destroyed the paternity of the Father in Adam and Eve, and continues to do so. All of the three temptations begins with a subconscious doubt **'If you are the Son of God'**, the purpose of all temptation is not just to make us sin, but to separate us from the Father, and make us into spiritual orphans, defenceless and weak, with no self identity.

Suggestion : Jesus gave us a mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, her maternal job description is to lead us into the House of the Father, in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, she did this for the apostles, through her prayer, at Pentecost, drawing down on them the gift of the Holy Spirit. Pray the 33 day De Montford consecration, take up the rosary in this time, Mary will do bring you home to the Father's house.

Fr David Falcon

