

PARISH OF BLESSED JAMES BELL

*Serving St Benedict's, St Mary's & St Oswald's,
Warrington*



19th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

9th August 2020

Entrance Procession

Music: Dear Lord and Father of mankind

Greeting & Introduction

Penitential Act

Let us pray together:

**I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,
through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
whom, taught by the Holy Spirit,
we dare to call our Father,
bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts
the spirit of adoption as your sons and daughters,
that we may merit to enter into the inheritance
which you have promised.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

(1 Kings 19: 9, 11-13)

A reading from the first book of the Kings

When Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain of God, he went into the cave and spent the night in it. Then he was told, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord.' Then the Lord himself went by. There came a mighty wind, so strong it tore the mountains and shattered the rocks before the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there came the sound of a gentle

breeze. And when Elijah heard this, he covered his face with his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

The word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 85

**Lord, let us see your kindness,
and grant us your salvation.**

- 1 I will hear what God proclaims;
the Lord – for he proclaims peace.
Near indeed is his salvation
to those who fear him,
glory dwelling in our land.
- 2 Kindness and truth shall meet;
justice and peace shall kiss.
Truth shall spring out of the earth,
and justice shall look down from heaven.

Gospel Acclamation (Lourdes)

Gospel

(Matthew 14: 22-33)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

R. Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a head-wind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered. 'Lord,' he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily

Bidding Prayers

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

Music: Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ – J S Bach

Prayer over the Offerings

Be pleased, O Lord,

to accept the offerings of your Church,
for in your mercy you have given them to be offered
and by your power you transform them
into the mystery of our salvation.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

Eucharistic Acclamations

Sanctus En Fa Majeur – Lourdes

The Mystery of Faith

**When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,
until you come again.**

Communion Rite

Music: Calm me, Lord – Margaret Rizza

Prayer after Communion

May the communion in your Sacrament
that we have consumed, save us, O Lord,
and confirm us in the light of your truth.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

Concluding Rite

Blessing & Dismissal

Distribution of Communion

Music: Be not afraid – St Louis Jesuits

Acknowledgements

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SUNDAY REFLECTION



Reflection by Eamonn Murphy, a parishioner of St Bartholomew's, Rainhill

If asked to describe a picture of our world today most of us would mention our fears for our children, violence, the environment, the political situation, and indeed fears about our health, if our next pay cheque will suffice or the seeming pointlessness of daily life. At the same time many of us enjoy a standard of living that the wealthy of previous ages could not even dream of: access to transport, shops, exotic holidays, life expectancy and of course being able to view the

world in our homes on a screen. Opportunities unheard of... We have so much to be grateful for!

Yet, a storm is raging. We are desperate, often alone and far away - feeling we are in darkness with a strong wind against us. We are being battered by the high seas, threatened from without by a hostile world and from within by fear and little faith. It is as if Matthew is describing our situation in 2020.

And then Jesus comes walking towards the disciples. They do not recognize him because of their fear. They think he is a ghost. Likewise, fear keeps us from recognizing, loving, and following Jesus as he walks with us and saves us in times of crisis. 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.' Jesus wants to give them - to give us - his strength, his absolute trust in the Father.

Our Church and parish communities are also fearful and are struggling to overcome fear: fear of losing followers, losing prestige, fear of rejection by society. Like ourselves our leaders fear taking risks. And yet playing in the background are Jesus' words 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'

It is as if we don't know if Christ is a ghost or a real living person, raised up by the Father for our salvation. It is as if we feel that we don't have all the arguments to prove what we say we believe. We are committed but we doubt.

Peter, responding to Jesus' invitation to 'Come,' walks until he forgets Jesus' words and becomes frightened. Paralysed by fear he feels himself sinking into the depths. Just in time Peter cries out, 'Lord save me!'

In that moment of letting go, in that moment of acceptance, Peter's eyes were opened as ours can be too. In that moment of crying out, we can see Christ as a hand, held out to sustain our faith, to save us while saying at the same time: 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?'

Why do we doubt? The reality is that sometimes our convictions fade away. Sometimes we feel overwhelmed by the uncertainties of life. Sometimes life is just like that. Jesus understood this as he invited Peter to 'Come.' Life is like walking on water. It's not firm ground, certainties are absent. It's a scary business.

It is then when we are at our weakest, our most selfish selves, our sinful selves when there is nothing left to do but to cry out 'Lord save me.' It is then we notice that our doubts and insecurities will not defeat us. Our search for God is a journey through risk, insecurity, overcoming doubt and accepting that God is with us; 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.' Our questions and doubts remain and won't be resolved. Yet, we can cry out 'Lord save me', trusting that faith means walking on water, always expecting a hand to save us when we begin to sink.

I think of the Liverpool anthem; 'Walk on, walk on, with hope in your hearts and you'll never walk alone.' That tangible hope we believe is Jesus' presence with and within us 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'