

St Michael's Parish, Nowra

Incorporating the Catholic Communities of St Michael's, Nowra – St. Patrick's, Berry – Sacred Heart, Bomaderry - Help of Christians, Culburra – St Joseph's, Kangaroo Valley – Holy Spirit, Vincentia.



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THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER Year B

18th April 2021

WALKING ON WATER AND SINKING LIKE A STONE

By Ron Rolheiser OMI

Faith isn't something you ever simply achieve. It's not something that you ever nail down as a fait accompli. Faith works this way: Some days you walk on water and other days you sink like a stone. Faith invariably gives way to doubt before it again recovers its confidence, then it loses it again.

We see this graphically illustrated in the famous story in the gospels of Peter walking on water. The story goes this way: The disciples had just witnessed a major miracle, Jesus feeding more than 5000 people with five loaves of bread and two fishes. Having just witnessed a miracle, their faith was strong. Soon afterwards they get into a boat to cross a lake. Jesus is not with them. A few miles out they run into a fierce storm and begin to panic. Jesus comes walking towards them on the water. Initially they're frightened and take him for a ghost. But he calms their fear by telling them, right from the centre of the storm, that he is not just Jesus but that he is God's very presence.

Peter is immediately buoyed up in his faith and asks Jesus to let him too walk on the water. Jesus invites him to do so and Peter gets out of the boat confidently and begins to walk on the water. But then, realizing what he was doing and the incredulous nature of it, he immediately starts to sink, cries out for help, and Jesus has to reach out and rescue him from drowning.

What we see illustrated here are two things that lie at the heart of our experience of faith, namely, that faith (literally) has its ups and downs and that it works best when we don't confuse it with our own powers.

Faith has its ups and downs: We see this, almost pictorially illustrated, in the incident of Peter walking on the water. Initially his faith feels strong and he confidently steps onto the sea and begins to walk. But, almost immediately upon realizing what he was doing, he starts to sink. Our own faith works exactly like that, at times it lets us walk on water and at other times we sink like a stone. The gospel-image of Peter walking on the sea speaks for itself.

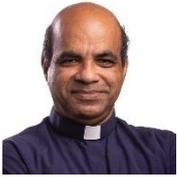
However if we feel discouraged because our faith vacillates in this way, we can take consolation from these words from Julian of Norwich. Describing one of her visions, she writes: "After this He [Jesus] showed a most excellent spiritual pleasure in my soul: I was completely filled with everlasting certainty, powerfully sustained without any painful fear. This feeling was so joyful and so spiritual that I was wholly in peace and in repose and there was nothing on earth that would have grieved me. This lasted only a while, and I was changed and left to myself in such sadness and weariness of my life, and annoyance with myself that scarcely was I able to have patience to live. ... And immediately after this, our Blessed Lord gave me again the comfort and the rest in my soul, in delight and in security so blissful and so powerful that no fear, no sorrow, no bodily pain that could be suffered would have distressed me. And then pain showed again to my feeling, and then the joy and delight, and now the one, and now the other, various times." (Showings 15)

Julian of Norwich was a renowned mystic with an exceptional faith and, yet, like Peter, she too vacillated between walking on water and sinking like a stone. Her confident feelings came – but they also left. As well, faith works best when we don't confuse it with our own efforts. For example, Donald Nichol, in his book, *Holiness*, shares a story of a British missionary working in Africa. At one point, early on in his stay there, the missionary was called upon to mediate a dispute between two tribes. He had no preparation for this, was naïve, and totally out of his depth. But he gave himself over to the task in faith and, surprisingly, reconciled the two tribes. Afterwards, buoyed by this success, he began to fancy himself as mediator and began to present himself as an arbiter of disputes. But now, however, his efforts were invariably unhelpful. Here's the irony: when he didn't know what he was doing, but trusted solely in God, he was able to walk on water; as soon as he began to wrap himself in the process, he sank like a stone.

Faith works like that: We can walk on water only as long as we don't think that we are doing it with our own strength.

The Sufi mystic, Rumi, once wrote that we live with a deep secret that sometimes we know, and then not, and then we know it again. Faith works like that, some days we walk on water, other days we sink like a stone, and then later we walk on water again.

We welcome to our parish Fr Joseph Pothenparampil



Fr Joseph, belonging to the Missionary Society of St. Thomas the Apostle (MST) has been serving in Australia since 2009 in various parishes under the Diocese of Sandhurst up until his move to the Diocese of Wollongong in 2019.

Fr Joseph was born on 8 May 1963 in Kerala, India to a traditional, agricultural family of Catholic faith. He is the youngest of three children. His siblings and Mother live in India.

Mum is in her 80s and visited Australia in 2017.

After his Priestly Ordination on 30 April 1992, Fr Joseph served mainly in the suburbs of one of the busiest cities in India, Mumbai. He was instrumental in acquiring lands and constructing five churches by organising various communities while there. His last project was building and developing Santhome School at Mira Road together with MST house for his missionary society (MST) where he served as the project manager and administrator before his move to Australia.

During his 11 years of service in the Diocese of Sandhurst, Fr Joseph was parish priest at St. Mary's, Mooroopna, St. Michael's and Sacred Heart parishes of Tallangatta and Corryong respectively. He was also the Canonical Administrator of St Michael's School, Tallangatta and Sacred Heart School, Corryong.

Fr. Joseph longed for the hustle and bustle of an urban parish after working in regional/rural Victoria for a long time and hence decided to the Wollongong diocese where he was appointed to Camden before his present appointment to us.

We pray and wish him many blessings in our very diverse parish.



The Parish Playgroup will recommence on Monday 19th April from 9:00am. St Michael's School Hall foyer. Follow the Facebook page for updates

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/877291895675332>



THE FUTURE OF CATHOLICISM IN AUSTRALIA

FORUM 1: Renewal Directions, Priorities, Hopes and Aspirations

*The Australasian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform invites Australian Catholics to the first in a series of convocations via Zoom with guest speaker **Sr Joan Chittister OSB.***

Joan's address will combine practical proposals and visionary ideas around the themes of synodality, subsidiarity, inclusivity, transparency and accountability.

She will relate her presentation to local and overseas contexts, such as the Plenary Council process and submissions, Vatican II documents and the words of Pope Francis. The President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge supports the Convocation and will give an official greeting to the participants. He acknowledged in a recent interview that reform is needed in the Church because 'the current mode of leadership is unsustainable'.

**FREE REGISTRATION - <https://garratt1.wufoo.com/forms/s1698nzm1qsjym3/>
or **GOOGLE:** garratt1.wufoo.com**



Ladies, are you ready to step back out into life with your Faith community, following the forced Covid hibernation?

Join us for a Cursillo 3-day weekend **July 1st – 4th at Hartzler Park, Bowral.**

Share your stories; increase the depth of your faith; listen to talks from our spiritual Advisor and lay women. Celebrate daily Mass.

For further information please contact Denise D'Amore 0438 254 139.

Part time employment opportunity

The position vacant is for a Home Care Assistant. We have several elderly sisters living within our community at Jamberoo who require help with personal care, household cleaning and transportation to appointments. Monday – Friday 7.30am – 12.30pm 25-30 hours per week

Previous experience in Home Care or Community Aged Care essential.

For full job description and requirements please contact accounts@jamberooabbey.org.au

Weekend Masses

Nowra			Culburra			Vincentia		
Saturday		5:00pm	Saturday		5:00pm	Saturday		5:00pm
Sunday		8:00am	Bomaderry	Sunday	9:30am	Sunday		9:30am
		9:30am	K'Valley	Sunday	11:00am	Croatian Mass	Saturday	6:15 pm
		5:00pm	Berry	Sunday	8:00am		1 st Saturday of the month	

Weekday Masses

Nowra			Berry			K' Valley		
Monday to Friday		8:00am	Tuesday –		5:30pm	Tuesday to Thursday		9:00am
Wednesday		5:30pm	Culburra	Thursday –	5:30pm	Vincentia	Mon, Thurs & Friday	8:00am
Friday		11:30am	Bomaderry	Friday –	5:30pm		Tue & Wed	5:30pm

Reconciliation/Confessions

Nowra	Saturday: 9:30 – 10:30	Culburra	Saturday before 5:00pm Vigil Mass
Berry	Tuesday following 5:30 Mass	Vincentia	Saturday: 4:00pm
Bomaderry	Friday following 5:30 Mass		

Check in with the SERVICE NSW QR CODE

Nowra, Culburra, Berry and Bomaderry – **are now using the Service NSW QR check in (the Service NSW QR remembers your details) or signing in at the door.**

For Mass at Kangaroo Valley, please email ronankangaroo1@gmail.com

For Mass at Vincentia - **are now using the Service NSW QR check in you no longer need to book for Mass.**



We prayerfully remember the recently deceased especially: **John Anthony Ryan** (brother of Mons Paul Ryan) and those whose anniversaries occur at this time: **Bishop William Murray**. We also pray for all who have died from Covid-19 in Australia and worldwide.

Third Sunday of Easter Year B

Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Ps 65:1-2

Cry out with joy to God, all the earth; O sing to the glory of his name.
O render him glorious praise, alleluia.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 3:13-15. 17-19

Peter said to the people: 'You are Israelites, and it is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, who has glorified his servant Jesus, the same Jesus you handed over and then disowned in the presence of Pilate, after Pilate had decided to release him. It was you who accused the Holy One, the Just One, you who demanded the reprieve of a murderer while you killed the prince of life. God, however, raised him from the dead, and to that fact we are the witnesses.

'Now I know, brothers, that neither you nor your leaders had any idea what you were really doing; this was the way God carried out what he had foretold, when he said through all his prophets that his Christ would suffer. Now you must repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out.'

Responsorial Psalm Ps 4:2. 4. 7. 9. **Response** Lord, let your face shine on us.

1. When I call, answer me, O God of justice;
from anguish you released me, have mercy
and hear me! (R.)
2. It is the Lord who grants favours to those
whom he loves; the Lord hears me whenever
I call him. (R.)
3. 'What can bring us happiness?' many say.
Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.
(R.)
4. I will lie down in peace and sleep comes at
once, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in
safety. (R.)

A reading from the first letter of St John

1 Jn 2:1-5

I am writing this, my children, to stop you sinning; but if anyone should sin, we have our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who is just; he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away, and not only ours, but the whole world's. We can be sure that we know God only by keeping his commandments. Anyone who says, 'I know him', and does not keep his commandments, is a liar, refusing to admit the truth. But when anyone does obey what he has said, God's love comes to perfection in him.

Gospel Acclamation

Lk 24:32

Alleluia, alleluia! Lord Jesus, make your word plain to us: make our hearts burn with love when you speak. Alleluia!

Gospel

Lk 24:35-48

The disciples told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised Jesus at the breaking of bread.

They were still talking about all this when Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!' In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts rising in your hearts? Look at my hands and feet; yes, it is I indeed. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this he showed them his hands and feet. Their joy was so great that they could not believe it, and they stood dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes.

Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, has to be fulfilled.' He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'So you see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.'

Communion Antiphon

Lk 24:35

The disciples recognized the Lord Jesus in the breaking of the bread, alleluia.