

# TRINITY NEWS

## Pentecost 8 Made for Something More than the Fear of Failure

The account of Peter attempting to walk on water is found at Matthew 14:22-32. Jesus tells his disciples to go the other side of Lake Galilee. He dismisses the crowd. Then he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When he goes to pray it is not only to offer everything up to his heavenly Father, but also to prepare himself for the events that follow. He was alone. This shows his isolation from the disciples, who are out on Lake Galilee in a boat being battered by the waves and far from the land. The wind was against them and they were having a tough time maintaining their course.

When Jesus came to them early in the morning walking on water they cried out in fear, saying, "It is a phantasma!" Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; don't be afraid." The tender words of reassurance and encouragement are meant to calm their fears. These words resonate for us when we are afraid in life. So these words reassure them of his love for them and his endeavour to enter their fears. Then Peter wanted to respond, and confronting his fears he asks Christ to command him to step out of the boat. Jesus says, "Come". "So Peter got out of the boat and started walking on the water." But the strong wind must have caused him to sway, or at least to be anxious. His bravery left him and he began to sink into the water and into his fears. He cries out to Jesus to save him. At that moment Jesus reaches out to Peter and takes his hand, right there in the water, in the midst of his doubts and fear of being out of control.

This is the extreme point in the miracle: Jesus standing in water and reaching down to Peter who is sinking! Jesus says to Peter and those in the boat and to all of us in many contexts, "You of little faith, why did you doubt? When they got into the boat the wind ceased and those in the boat worshiped Jesus as the "Son of God". The way in which Christ reaches out to Peter is a great assurance to us when we free-falling and out of control. "You and I were made for something more than merely avoiding failure. There is something inside us that wants to walk on the water – to leave the comfort of routine existence and abandon ourselves to the high adventure of following God". I told the student who wrote those words in a sermon to go on talking to people like that for the rest of his life. Great stuff! We are not told how Peter felt when he got back into the boat. Perhaps the words from "In the Garden" express some of it:

And He walks with me and He talks with me  
And He tells me I am His own.  
And the joy we share as we tarry there  
None other has ever known.  
C.Austin Miles

**Bishop Arthur Jones**

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### TO PLAN:

August 9, Tuesday.

- Bible Study, 10am

August 11, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am,  
Chapel

### NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:

Isaiah 56:1, 6-7;

Psalms 67;

Romans 11:13-15,29-32;

Matthew 15:21-28