

## Homily for the 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday, Year B

Vigil Mass and St Dunstan's, 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> June 2015

You will have seen in the news this week that the Church of the Multiplication, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee at the spot where the miracle of the loaves and fishes took place was subject to an arson attack. I have visited the Church, bought this stole in the gift shop which was destroyed. The Church is in the care of a Benedictine monastery. It is ironic that this church is on the shore of the Sea of Galilee where the calming of the storm took place. The Sea of Galilee is normally like a mill-pond, but storms can quickly arise when the wind is funnelled between two cliffs situated to the west of the lake, called the Horns of Hattin. That was what happened in the gospel story today.

Storms can arise from nowhere in all areas of life:

- A world storm is brewing if Greece defaults on its debt repayment at the end of the month. UK pensions could lose 10% of their value if this were to happen, we are told.
- The crisis of refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers. UN statistics were published this week that said 59.5m people are in this state, that's 1 in 122 people on the planet and half of them are children.
- Storms arise in the Church – the child abuse scandal is one which rocked the church is one; the Irish referendum result on same-sex “marriages”.
- And nearer to home, a sudden illness in the family is a storm.

Storms do arise. The message of today's liturgy is to trust God when that happens, to have faith in God's power to overcome the storm, God's strength to see you and the boat though to calmer waters. The reading from Job, God's answer to Job, is a statement that God is in control, even when we don't feel like so certain.

The gospels can be read at another level too, as is often the case. Some see the boat as referring to the Church itself, the barque of Peter. And when Jesus wakes up, that is a reference to the Resurrection. The Church is the sacrament of Christ, resurrected Jesus is present in his Church to lead it and guide it if we let him.

Today's readings are about faith. Two prayers of faith which I have found helpful in stormy circumstances are:

Psalm 45: “Be still and know that I am God, supreme among the nations, supreme on the earth.”

And secondly, St Teresa of Avila when she said:

“Let nothing trouble you  
Let nothing frighten you  
Whoever has God lacks nothing  
God alone is enough.”