

The message is clear: The boat represents the Church, and the disciples represent all believers, while the storm represents the difficulties and doubts the Church is facing. Only when they let go of fear and trust in him do the disciples recognise who Jesus truly is and his power to save them. Trust in Jesus can overcome all our fears.

## PAINFUL REVELATIONS

Almost 33 years ago I began my career as a Redemptorist parish missionary. I gave missions throughout Ulster and north Leinster, and spoke from a lot of pulpits. I loved it. Churches were full, people were enthusiastic, the buzz was wonderful. In my sermons I lauded people for their centuries-long fidelity to the Church and encouraged them to do even better. While vocations and church attendance were beginning to fall, the future seemed bright. All appeared tranquil, at least on the surface. I had no idea of the violent storms that lay just ahead.

Then, suddenly, in the space of a few years, scandals and crises began to engulf the Church and it found itself in the eye of a terrible unrelenting storm, waves crashing against it from every side. Revelations of sex abuse and other scandals shook people to the core. Catholics began to abandon the practice of the faith, while an aggressive secularism found new strength.

Preaching parish missions became more challenging. I had to rewrite my sermons. I felt seasick.

But the storm had been brewing for a long time. The Church had big problems long before the abuse scandals came along. It was too priest-centred and clerical. It failed to make use of the talents of lay people. It didn't encourage an adult faith. It allowed a whole generation of young people to be lost. It was too complacent, too casual, too smug, rather like the crew of the Titanic on its maiden voyage. And so it was left shocked and stricken by the storm when it broke, just like the apostles in today's Gospel.

In the Gospel story, Jesus called Peter to face the storm and not to lose his nerve. Jesus challenges us to face today's storms head-on too, to place our faith and trust in him, knowing that with him we will be safe, but without him all will be lost.

## CALLED TO TRUST

As Christians, we know that Jesus is with us in the midst of the storms in which we find ourselves. But he is more than with us; he calls on us to face those storms. What might facing the storms mean today? It means speaking truth to power in the Church and doing so in love. It means trusting totally in Jesus. It means letting go of fear. It means being ready, like Peter, to venture everything on Jesus's word.

## THE COVID STORM

The Covid-19 pandemic caught everyone by surprise. Suddenly, life as we knew it came to a grinding halt. In those first frightening days last March, the spirit of national solidarity was striking. Few complained about the closure of schools, pubs and restaurants, or the need to wear face masks. Few complained when the money-spinning St Patrick's Day festivities were called off. We were all in this together. United, determined, we would defeat this existential threat to our lives and livelihoods, as we had done with Foot and Mouth in the past.

The sense of common purpose was palpable, and galvanising. The surreal quiet of cities and towns suddenly devoid of traffic; streets and footpaths without pedestrians; shop fronts shuttered; traffic lights signalling forlornly to themselves. It was an eerie, apocalyptic scene. A veritable storm.

In the midst of this storm, wonderful things happened. We witnessed the extraordinary selflessness and dedication of care providers and essential workers, putting in long hours and long weeks, at risk to themselves and their loved ones, going beyond the call of duty—heroes and heroines at their best. We witnessed the support families and neighbours offered each other, even if only through Zoom. We witnessed church people reaching out to each other, establishing virtual parishes, vibrant online Christian communities. All of these are signs of Christ's presence with us, supporting us, keeping us afloat, even in the most violent of storms. ■



## Today's readings

Job 38 1.8-11  
2 Cor 14-17  
Mk 4:35-41

Jesus reveals himself even as master of the wind and the sea. Even the storm falls silent before him. Jesus will guide his Church and guide its members through all life's storms.

## GOD'S WORD TODAY

# Stu( )space

20 June 2021 – 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

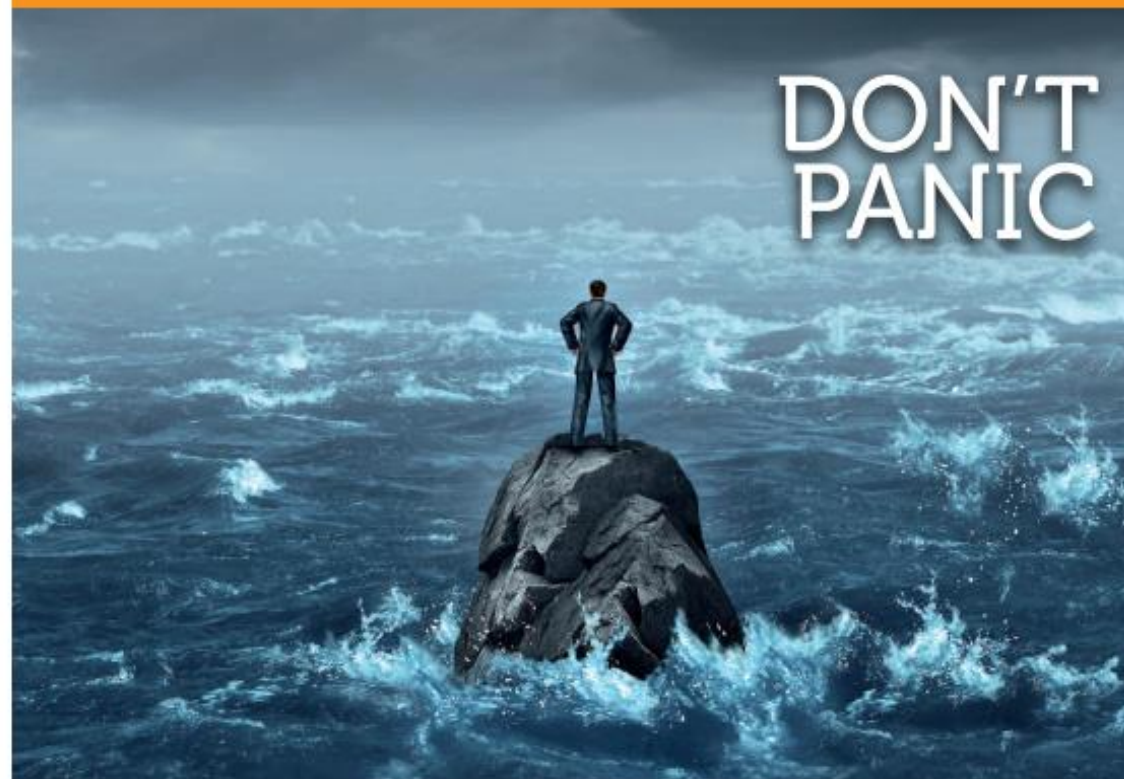
Psalter Week 2

## SERIES: POINTERS ON THE JOURNEY

Season colour: **GREEN**

In this series, **Gerard Moloney, C.Ss.R** reflects on the Gospel in the context of today.

# DON'T PANIC



**Jesus is with us in the midst of the storms in which we find ourselves. But he is more than with us; he calls on us to face those storms.**

Imagine the disciples' panic. There they are in the boat all by themselves when a storm begins to rage. It's so bad the boat is in danger of sinking, and they are full of fear. All seems lost... and then they see Jesus walking towards them, on the water.

Eager as ever, Peter asks Jesus if he can walk towards him on the water, and Jesus invites him to come. So he sets out, but the wind rises, and he panics and starts to sink. Even Peter, the most important figure in the early Church, has a faith that falters in the midst of the storm. But Jesus saves him, and then rebukes him for his weak faith.

As soon as they get into the boat, the winds calm, and the awestruck disciples acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God.



# Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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## 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – 20<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### Anniversary Masses

#### Leitrim

Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Bernadette Savage  
Bernard Cunningham and John Blaney  
Patrick and Mary Rice

Sat 26<sup>th</sup> Meta Mooney  
Michael McElroy  
Oisin Blaney

#### Gargory

Sun 20<sup>th</sup> Noel King

#### Dromara

Sun 27<sup>th</sup> Hugh McCoubry  
Liz Gordon

### Collections 13<sup>th</sup> Jun

	<u>Parish</u>
Dromara	£213
Drumgooland	£490

**Congratulations to** the P4 children of St Matthew's PS, Magheramayo who celebrated their First Holy Communion on Sat 12<sup>th</sup> June.

**Congratulations to** Martin Doyle and Tamara O'Rourke who were married recently

### Lough Derg 2021

Registration is now open to "*Do Lough Derg from wherever you are*" from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> July.

The Prior, Fr La Flynn, will do the Three-Day Pilgrimage on the Island during these days.

To offer a live link by webcam in support of those who will choose to do the pilgrimage wherever they are, some of the Lough Derg staff will do the pilgrimage in St. Mary's Church in Pettigo.

To register or for further information please:

Email: [info@loughderg.org](mailto:info@loughderg.org),

Telephone: 00353 71 861518.

Website: [www.loughderg.org](http://www.loughderg.org)

### Weekend masses

Sat 6:00pm Dechomet  
7:30pm Leitrim  
Sun 9:00am Gargory  
11:00am Dromara

### Weekday masses

There will not be any weekday masses this week from Mon 21<sup>st</sup> until Fri 25<sup>th</sup> June

I will be away on Retreat from Sun 20<sup>th</sup> until Sat 26<sup>th</sup> June (morning).

Any emergency sick calls or deaths please try Fr Brian Brown 074 9673 1619

(Masses back to normal the following week)

**Face coverings** are mandatory at all church gatherings, mass, baptisms, funerals and weddings. Please help to protect yourself and others by wearing one.

### Virtual Pilgrimage to Knock

Pandemic conditions mean we could not organise a physical pilgrimage *en masse* to Knock this year. Nonetheless, Dromore will be represented in Knock this Sunday, and all can follow Mass live from the Shrine at 3pm on Sunday 20 June via webcam:

[www.knockshrine.ie](http://www.knockshrine.ie).

Your intentions will be prayed for at Our Lady's shrine.

### Drumgooland St Vincent de Paul

Are you experiencing difficulties and need a helping hand?

Contact us in confidence on 075 8644 7427