



12th Week of the Year: 20th/21st June 2021

Reflection / Homily – Mgr Daniel McHugh

“Even the wind and the sea obey him.”

The “Euros” have taken over the airwaves, and England for the first time ever (it seems) have won their opening match. Not only that, but, as I write this Reflection on Thursday 17th June, Wales have just won their second match against Turkey! If you are not a football fan, this may all be a bit of a bore, but everyone, football fan or not, woke up when the young footballer Christian Eriksen from Denmark collapsed and nearly died on the pitch Saturday last. Suddenly the world almost stopped and people were heard to say “how fragile life is”. His football team stood around him in shock, and fear; the country whatever their football or religious affiliation, prayed for his recovery, for his family.

There are moments when we all come to realise that we are in powers, in hands greater than ourselves. Such was the case in the Gospel of St Mark for the 12th Sunday: experienced fishermen are in a boat fishing when a sudden storm erupts; so terrifying that even experienced boatmen are unable to cope. Jesus was asleep in the boat and they turn to him “Master, do you not care? We are going down.” Jesus used this as a teaching moment for the disciples: he calms the storm and they ask “Who is this? Even the wind and sea obey him.” Jesus questions their lack of Faith in Him: “Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no Faith?” The miracle is wonderful in itself, but it is about more than the storm on the lake; it is about trust in Jesus. St Paul puts it this way in the second reading: “For anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here”.

For the Burning Bush VLOG in this 12th week I chose the Hymn

*“Lead us, heav’nly Father, lead us
o’er the world’s tempestuous sea:…
Spirit of our God, descending,
fill our hearts with heav’nly joy,…
thus provided, pardoned, guided,
nothing can our peace destroy.”*

We all experience moments of fragility on the sea of life; moments when we need to know who to turn to.

The saints are icons, signposts for us in the community of the Church. One that comes to mind in this week is St Brendan whose burial place is a Church of Ireland Cathedral in Clonfert, Co. Galway. He was born in Tralee and is especially known for the holiness of his monastic way of life and his travelling in search for God. He is even said to have been the first to reach the United States, and this was the 500s. It is probably a legend, but who knows?

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He is well known for this quote “our boat is so small and the sea is so large”, and I like this prayer by him particularly:

I will trust in the darkness and know that my times are in your hands. I will believe you for my future, chapter by chapter, until the story is written.”

Both the quote and the prayer speak to us of life in these uncertain times, and the trust that we too can place in Our Lord, even when He seems to be asleep in the stern of our little boat. Yes, if we take our troubles to Him, we will begin to see things from a different perspective.

And, there will be those who are standing round us to pray for us on our journey, that we will find calm in the storm. This week I went to a favorite place of mine to walk and see the views: Cader Idris on the Mid-Wales coast. I passed by the Carmelite Monastery just outside Dolgellau: there are the woman of prayer who stand before God for us. We thank God for them and our family and friends who stand by us and pray for us on the journey.

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