

12 (B)

It is a beautiful day in the Park, and a young father is pushing his screaming child in his pram. As the father wheels his infant son along the path, he keeps murmuring, "easy now, Donald. just keep calm, Donald". It's all right Donald. Just relax - it's going to be all right Donald'. A woman passes by and says to the young father, 'you certainly know how to talk to an upset child – quietly and gently'. The woman then leans over the pram and says: 'what seems to be the trouble, Donald' and the father says, 'Oh no, he's Henry. I'm Donald.

People of faith are not easily rattled. Even in the midst of pressure they're not phased. Those with a gloomier outlook on life seem to be guided by Murphy's Law: '*whatever can go wrong will go wrong*'. Our happiness or unhappiness in life will often depend on how we perceive things. Some people have a jaded view of things which is often out of sync with reality.

The apostles in today's Gospel seem very frightened even though Jesus was with them in the boat, albeit asleep. They said to Him 'do you not care, we are going down' Sometimes we lash out at people when fear and insecurities take over. However our friends often rightly remind us that 'things are not quite as bad as we are making them out to be' or 'there is light at the end of every tunnel'.

When a person's faith in God is on the wane, a void is created, providing ideal conditions for insecurities, whether real or imaginary, to rush in and fill the void. Fear, of course is the opposite of faith. Jesus said to the apostles; 'why are you so frightened, where's your faith? But it's not just apprehension in the face of immediate physical dangers. Some fears originate from an awful experience people may have had in childhood and will re-emerge later in life in the form of an irrational fear or dread. These things can cast a shadow over our day to day lives and keep us from living life to the full and being happy.

As the Lord rebuked the wind and the sea in today's gospel, why don't we ask him in today's Mass to rebuke whatever threatens us and send these demons on their way? It's not the will of God that our freedom be curtailed by fear. He wants to be 'our bridge over troubled waters' or, as it says in the psalm, 'to lead us to restful waters where we find peace.'

The invitation of Jesus in today's gospel is clear: 'have faith in me and do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid' or as the hymn goes: 'Put your hands in the hand of the man who stills the waters, put your hands in the hand of the man who calms the sea'.