

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 far from phased. Those with a gloomier outlook on life may seem bound by Murphy's Law: *'whatever can go wrong will go wrong'*. They say 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder' Well, our perception of reality can often be coloured solely by what's in the eye of the beholder as well.

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 fears and insecurities take hold of us. However our friends often rightly remind us that 'things are not quite as bad as we are making them out to be'. The Devil wants to demoralise us by painting a blacker than black picture of the problem which is often way out of proportion with the real situation.

When a person's faith in God is fragile, 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, O you of little faith? But it's not just the fear when faced with physical danger. Some fears originate from an upsetting childhood experience and will re-emerge later in life in the form of an irrational fear or dread. These things can shake

our confidence and keep us from being at peace within. 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 keeps us down and send these demons on their way? It's not the will of God that our lives be blighted by fears of one kind or another. He wants to be 'our bridge over troubled waters' or our 'port in the storm'.

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 hand in the hand of the man who stills the waters, put your hands in the hand of the man who calms the sea'. Put your hand in the hand of the Man from Galilee.