

The Revd Stan Evans

Camino de las Cuestas 5c | 35572 Tias

Email: revdstanevans@gmail.com | T: +34 928 514241



ANGLICAN PARISH
ST. LAURENCE IN LANZAROTE

LIVING ROOM SERVICE #3 - SERMON

“Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.”

What are our worst fears?

Perhaps the fears we had as a child ... thunderstorms, lightening, storms at seas – but of course we have learned to be cautious and to be sensible and to keep our distance – and to be awe of God’s creation.

Imagine though the fear of those disciples in the boat as described in our Gospel reading. The boat was being battered and far from land. The wind was against them.

Peter sees Christ walking on the lake or floating effortlessly above the water.

At first, he thinks he is seeing a ghost.

But then Christ calls to him, and St Peter responds.

Once he recognises Christ, St Peter gets out of the boat, starts walking on the water, and comes towards Christ. But what happens next? Fear takes over. He loses his confidence and when he then notices the strong wind, he takes his mind off walking towards Christ, he is frightened, and he begins to sink.

And like most of us when we are faced with a problem and are overcome by fear, we scream out, *‘Lord save me!’*. Christ immediately reaches out his hand and catches him, saying to him *‘You of little faith, why did you doubt?’*

They get back into the boat, the wind ceases, and we are told those in the boat ‘worship him’ saying *‘Truly you are the Son of God’*.

Was the sight of Christ walking on the water an illusion?

Was Peter’s idea that he could walk on the water the product of an over-worked mind whilst he was sleeping?

Did he realise he was unprepared for the great encounter?

Did the wind cease when he woke from the dream?

All of these questions are over-analytical and fail to deal with the real encounter that takes place. Even before the Resurrection, in his frailty, in his weakness, in his humble humanity, St Peter calls out to Christ *‘Lord, save me!’*.

Do others in the boat fall down at Christ’s feet and worship him because he can walk on water? Because he can lift a drowning man out of the depths? Or because they recognise that in Christ they can find the end of all their worst dreams and nightmares?

The Revd Stan Evans

Camino de las Cuestas 5c | 35572 Tias

Email: revdstanevans@gmail.com | T: +34 928 514241



ANGLICAN PARISH
ST. LAURENCE IN LANZAROTE

St Paul almost chides us for this questioning, reminding us that people have a variety of experiences that help them grow in faith. As seasoned boat-handlers, the Disciples know not to try and walk on water. They know the risk of sudden swells and storms, and they know the safety of a good boat, as long as it has a good crew.

But since the early history of the Church, the boat has symbolised the Church.

None of us should risk walking on water, or risk playing stupidly in boats on the river or choppy waters or storms. But if we are to dream dreams for our Church, our Chaplaincy, for the Kingdom of God, we need to be aware that it comes with a risk warning. That warning is that we need to keep our eyes firmly focussed on Christ and his teaching; The Church is there to bring us on that journey.

So let us dream dreams; take risks for the Kingdom of God, step outside the box; but let us keep our eyes on Christ and remember that the boat, the Church, is essential for our journey, and let us continue to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness every day of our lives, never forgetting that we are not alone in the storms of life.

As Bishop David Hamid reminded us recently - We are not alone; we have our Lord Jesus present with us – and we have god’s powerful Spirit who dwells within us and strengthens us – so, whatever happens in our challenging road of discipleship, God will take care of us.

Amen.