

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish **Bulletin for Teens**

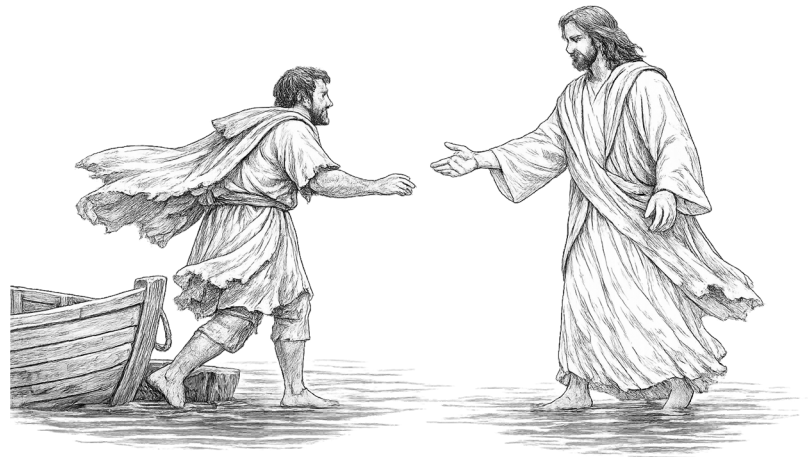
Doubt is not defeat



Sunday the 9th of August 2026, Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a head-wind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear.



But at once Jesus called out to them, saying 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered. 'Lord', he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord

"Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid"

Picture the scene: the disciples are out on the lake at night. They are exhausted, and the wind and waves are working against them. Someone is coming across the water towards them and their first reaction is terror. They think it is a ghost. But it is Jesus, and his response to their fear is "Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid."

Then Peter does something really bold. He says, "Lord, if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water." Peter gets out of the boat and actually walks on water just like Jesus, for a few steps. Then he starts to notice the wind, the dark, and the strangeness of the situation and gets scared. He starts to sink. Jesus immediately reaches out and catches him, asking "Why did you doubt?"

Three things to think about

1. Fear shows up right when you're doing something brave.
2. Doubt isn't the opposite of faith; it's often faith in the middle of a struggle.
3. Jesus doesn't wait for you to have it together before He reaches for you.

Fear shows up right when you're doing something brave?

Peter didn't sink because he was weak or unfaithful. He had already gotten out of the boat. He had already done the hard, faith filled thing. Fear and doubt often show up when you have committed or started to do something that is hard or new; when you are already out on the water. You might be speaking up for what's right, starting a new friendship, or being honest about your beliefs and what is important to you around people who might mock you. The moment of doubt often comes after you've already taken the first step. That doesn't mean you've failed. It means that you are human, and you're in good company with Peter.

Doubt isn't the opposite of faith, it's often faith in the middle of a struggle

Jesus wasn't scolding Peter when he asked "Why did you doubt?" Doubt hadn't sent Peter back to the boat, it sent him toward Jesus, crying out "Lord, save me!". That's important. Peter's doubt in this story isn't him losing faith, it is his faith being tested and still reaching for Jesus instead of giving up. Doubt can feel like a crisis, like something is wrong with you if you question, wonder or feel unsure about God, prayer or the Church. But Peter shows us that doubt and faith can exist in us at the same time, and the right move isn't to fake certainty, but to keep calling out to Jesus honestly, doubts and all. Faith isn't the absence of doubt, it's what you do with it.

Jesus doesn't wait for you to have it together before he reaches for you

The moment Peter cries out, Jesus stretches out His hand to him. Only after pulling Peter up does Jesus ask about the doubt. God's love and help aren't rewards for having enough faith, they are there even in the sinking, in the doubt and the darkness. You don't have to earn being saved. You just have to call out.

Challenge for the week

Choose one thing that you've been avoiding out of fear or doubt. It might be a conversation, a decision, and act of honesty or courage, or a doubt about your faith that you have been afraid to admit out loud. Act on it this week, but before you do, say a quick version of Peter's prayer: "Lord if it is you, tell me to come to you." If you start to sink partway through, being anxious, doubting or overwhelmed, don't quit and don't pretend you're fine. Honestly ask "Lord, save me," and notice that He does.

Prayer for the week

Lord Jesus, when the wind and waves of my life feel bigger than my faith, remind me that you are already walking toward me. Give me the courage to get out of the boat, and when doubt creeps in, don't let me hide it. Let me bring it straight to you like Peter did. Help me trust you more than I trust my fear. Amen

Come and join other young people in one of our Parish Youth Groups

The **Parish Secondary School Youth Group** that was called 'Forged', has been renamed 'Cana Youth'. The group is for those of you who are in Years 7 to 12. We meet fortnightly, 6-8pm, on a Friday night at the Saint Monica's Church Meeting Room. Come along for dinner, games, and a chance to learn about and discuss your faith. Meetings this term are on the 24th of July, 7th of August, 21st of August, 4th of September and the 19th of September.

A new youth group for Primary School students in Years 4-6, called 'Cana Kids' is starting this week. Cana Kids will meet from 11-12am every second Sunday in the St Monica's meeting room. Meeting dates for this term will be the 26th of July, 9th of August, 23rd of August, 6th of September and 20th of September.

For more information see the flyer in the foyer, the poster up in the foyer (or with the other notices outside the Church at St Michael's) or contact Rebecca and Katie (our Youth Coordinators) at youth.belconnennorth@cg.org.au.