

The Gathering – first video

Welcome - [KELVIN]

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Hello and welcome to St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow. My name is Kelvin Holdsworth and I am the Provost here.

There's no doubt that this year has been quite a year – and we are only just over half way through it. There's been much to worry over and much that has been frightening.

In our gospel today we find Jesus and the disciples in a frightening situation of their own – in a small boat in a storm. If that isn't the perfect gospel reading for us this year, I don't know what it.

But, as we will see the storm isn't the end of the story.

The storm is never the end of the story. Evil never has the last word. And pain is not forever.

God is with us, even in the stormiest of places.

And God is with us today.

Confession

[OLIVER] God is love and we are God's children.

There is no room for fear in love.

We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

[Silence]

God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed,

and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[KELVIN] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gloria - [SAZ]

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect - [KELVIN]

God of all power, your sovereign word comes to us in Christ. When your Church is in danger, make firm our trust; when your people falter, steady our faith. Show us in Jesus your power to save, that

we may always acclaim him as Lord, who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Ministry of the Word – second video

Reading: Matthew 13:1-9,18-23 – [SUET-LIN]

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mathew.

Glory to Christ our Saviour.

Immediately [Jesus] made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake. But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'

Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' He said, 'Come.' So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.

Praise to Christ our Lord.

Sermon [OLIVER]

Earlier this week at our house, we were talking about the gospel for today. Jesus walked on water. Peter tried. And Joe said, 'Well, this was only Peter's first attempt, right? Jesus had probably had some practice.' I shook my head and laughed. I said, 'I'm not sure

Jesus would've had to practice', but Joe was adamant. 'No', he said, 'something like that wouldn't just come naturally.'

Maybe he has a point.

Joe told me about his learning to ride a bike. He recounted, 'One day we took my stabilisers off. My dad put his hand on the back of the bike's seat. He ran alongside, while I pedalled.' But, at some point, Joe said, his dad let go. At first, Joe was none the wiser. He assumed things were just the same as at the start. But when he looked around, he saw that although his dad was there, his hand wasn't. Joe started to falter. The bike was racing forward, ground disappearing fast beneath his feet. It was a precarious, unsettling feeling. His bearings started to go, and he swerved left and then right. Joe tried to counteract these waves of imbalance by steering, but it was no use. It was all going wrong. Why had his dad let go? And then, crash.

This attempt was, of course, only the beginning of Joe's learning to ride a bike. It would take many more attempts—many more hands on the back of the bicycle seat, many more lessons of gravity, and many more discouraging falls. I suppose it's that way for anyone wanting to acquire a new skill like that. There's a learning curve.

Maybe Jesus' learning curve for walking on water wasn't steep. Perhaps he was a born-natural. But walking on water isn't what usually happens to human beings when they step out into a river or an ocean. Our feet tread the ground *underneath* the water. If we want our bodies to do something else—like float or swim—we need to assume a different position and use our limbs in different ways to stay on the water's surface. But these are things we have to come to know, to discover.

Some things take time, preparation and continued exercise. With repetition, we learn to feel our bodies in different ways, doing different things. We develop muscle memories and improved

coordination—all this through a routine of rehearsing. This isn't what happens naturally. One might say it's *super-natural*.

Like riding a bike, we may start on a spiritual journey raring to go, setting out to have something to do with the mysteries of God. With a sort of vision or sense of being accompanied by a higher power, we begin exploring. And often, folk find they get a good start—either with the support of a community or a friend, or with a boost from a meaningful, powerful encounter. These things propel us as we set out; they stabilise us with a sense of backing and safety. But as anybody who sticks with the journey soon discovers, at some point we find ourselves faltering, disoriented and untethered. We look down. We swerve. We tumble. And so ends attempt number one. What now?

There might be all sorts of reasons why we fall. Perhaps it is—as it was with Peter—because we became afraid. That would be perfectly normal. Maybe we lost confidence. Perhaps we became disoriented. Maybe it all became too much, overwhelming. However, maybe, it was because it was our first time, after all. Or, it was one of many tries, attempts. Some things take a while. This business of journeying with God, of twirling with the supernatural, is peculiar stuff. Maybe we just need more practice.

Intercessions [SISTER AJ]

We pray to God who is our shelter and strength,
always ready to help in times of trouble.

We pray for the world: for the catastrophe in Beirut, where many have been killed, injured, have nowhere to live, and for all working in hospitals in Beirut, for the leaders of the nations and their governments; for areas most besieged by the pandemic; for broken places where healthcare and resources are scarce and the pandemic brings further suffering.

We pray for our communities: for the elderly, confined to their homes and separated from family and support; for children, removed from school; for those who have lost their source of income; for those who fear for their homes; for those who have no home; for those offering extraordinary, everyday kindness. In Glasgow, we pray for the City Council, community councils and elected officials.

Lord, you are in the midst of us:

help us in our time of trouble.

We pray for the young and those in education: for those anxious about a place at university, or employment; for those worried about loved ones and friends; for those concerned about their own health; for teachers and for children going to school.

Lord, you are our refuge and strength:

let us not be afraid, even though the world is changed.

We pray for key workers: for all medical staff and hospital workers, who go to work knowing the risks they face; for medical researchers, seeking ways to prevent and to cure; for social workers, protecting the vulnerable; for care workers, providing contact and support to those who have no other help; for farmers, delivery and shop workers, keeping the nation provisioned; for cleaners, and our rubbish collectors.

Lord, be with us in our time of need:

**help us to do what has been asked of us,
and give us grace to help others do what has been asked of them.**

We pray for those who are sick: for those afflicted with coronavirus; for those with other illnesses leaving them vulnerable; for those with poor mental health and those in hospital remembering Elizabeth at this time.

Lord, we trust in you, because your love is constant:
**each day we give thanks to you for all our families, friends,
communities, this earth, help us to take care of all you give
us.**

We pray for the Church: for our fellow members in the Body of Christ throughout the world; for the Anglican Church of Rwanda, the Scottish Episcopal Church; for Mark our Primus, Bishop Kevin and the churches in this diocese remembering St Ninian's Castle Douglas and Christ Church Dalbeattie

Lord, you are in the midst of us:
**keep us fearless in proclaiming your Word and works,
and make us to be lights in the darkness.**

We pray for those who have died: for those who have died, those who have died suddenly and unexpectedly; for the families they leave behind; for their friends; for those who have died alone with no one to pray with them, and on his Year's Mind, John Bulman Brown.

May they rest in peace, **and rise in glory.**

Lord, may those who have waited for you
and hoped in your word
know your steadfast love face to face.

We offer up our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows,
our prayers, and our thanksgivings.

Merciful God, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Communion – third video

Offertory - [KELVIN]

I've lost track of the number of sermons and homilies and so on that have spoken of dropping a pebble in a pond and watching the ripples. It is a bit of a cliché. But it is a cliché that people use because it speaks of something that is true. You never do know where the ripples will reach.

Many people have been dropping pebbles in the pond here by making financial contributions to St Mary's. And the ripples from our common life are bringing comfort and peace to many in this city. Oh, and far from this city. The ripples of our worship reach places I would never have imagined.

If you would like to drop your own pebble in the pond and make your own financial contribution, please go to thecathedral.org.uk and click on Donate to St Mary's. And thank you.

Let us present our offerings to the Lord.

**Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory,
the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in
heaven and on earth is yours.**

All things come from you, and of your own we give you.

Eucharistic Prayer - [KELVIN]

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Worship and praise belong to you, Father,
in every place and at all times.

All power is yours. You created the heavens and established the
earth; you sustain in being all that is.

In Christ your Son our life and yours
are brought together in a wonderful exchange.

He made his home among us that we might for ever dwell in you.

Through your Holy Spirit you call us to new birth
in a creation restored by love.

As children of your redeeming purpose
we offer you our praise,
with angels and archangels
and the whole company of heaven,
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you,
most loving Father,
for the gift of your Son born in human flesh

He is the Word existing beyond time,
both source and final purpose,
bringing to wholeness all that is made.

Obedient to your will he died upon the Cross.

By your power you raised him from the dead.

He broke the bonds of evil
and set your people free to be his Body in the world

On the night when he was given up to death,
knowing that his hour had come,
having loved his own,
he loved them to the end.

At supper with his disciples
he took bread and offered you thanks.
He broke the bread,
and gave it to them, saying:
"Take, eat.

This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup,
he offered you thanks,
and gave it to them saying:

"Drink this, all of you.

This is my Blood of the new covenant;
it is poured out for you, and for all,
that sins may be forgiven.

Do this in remembrance of me."

**We now obey your Son's command.
We recall his blessed passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension;
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts
and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father,
and send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and this wine,
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,

and we may be kindled with the fire of your love
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body
to live and work to your praise and glory;
may we grow together in unity and love
until at last, in your new creation,
we enter into our heritage
in the company of the Virgin Mary,
the apostles, and prophets,
and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be to you,
Lord of all ages,
world without end.

Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.
Lord, unite us in this sign.

Lord's Prayer - [OLIVER]

As our Saviour has taught us,
so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Do not bring us
to the time of trial
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Music at Communion - [SAZ]

'Riversong' by Andy Beck

Blessing - [KELVIN]

My thanks go to all the modern disciples who have contributed to sharing the good news of Jesus in this service today.

There is an online coffee hour gathering at 12 noon each Sunday and it is always good to greet people there.

But now the blessing:

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

A hymn and materials for Young Church are available on the online worship page at www.thecathedral.org.uk/worship.

