

Who is Jesus Christ to you?

If you have ever taught students and felt the anxiety that they would probably not meet the desired expectations.... you are not alone, I am with you.

I felt this experience when I taught high school students to enable them join University in Uganda, when during that time only 2,000 students out of over 30,000 candidates who sat for the National examinations were admitted for full government funding.

Luckily a few joined Uni, calling me teacher, although I didn't like being called a teacher to this day.

Jesus had fed an extraordinarily large number of people with only 5 loaves and 2 fish as we heard last Sunday. The disciples who witnessed this event, were sent to cross over the sea as Jesus himself, after dispersing the crowd, took his much-needed retreat by climbing the mountain to pray. We heard this in our gospel beautifully read as usual by Reverend Les.

Having been reinvigorated by the heavenly Father, Jesus walked on water and as he approached his learners, I mean the disciples, they were frightened.

The disciples had encountered an extraordinary day as they witnessed the miraculous feeding of people.

As they crossed the lake on their boat, they were battered by the waves. They knew it was the daily order of events. They had no thought of Jesus being extra ordinary or smarter than them when it comes to matters to do with water.

After all, Jesus was only the Son of a Carpenter, and what more does he know when it comes to matters about the sea.

Simon Peter and his fishing cohort felt they were the experts on any matters to do with sea problems.

Surprisingly, Peter and his team could not imagine the extraordinary wonders Jesus performed a few hours ago. Being Jews well instructed in the law, the disciples saw Jesus re-enacting just the works that Moses had done in the past.

In the Old Testament, God fed the Israelites in the wilderness under the leadership of Moses with Manna. This event in which Jesus feeds a multitude, to them remained similar to Moses' action. There was nothing more other than seeing Jesus as the new Moses of their time.

Aware of their understanding that Moses led the Israelites across the red sea on dry land after parting the water, Jesus for his part, leaves the water undisturbed.

To reveal his identity as the Lord of all, Jesus walks on the water, not on dry ground as Moses did during the Exodus, but on water so that his footprints could not be marked.

This was extraordinary, far beyond imagination. The disciples in their situation were frightened if not traumatised, to witness a ghost-like person approaching them, under their watch.

But what could they do in that situation. Fortunately, Peter courageously reaches out to test the Spirit: 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.'

To satisfy this test, Peter walks on the water to clear his doubt and that of his fellow disciples. He unfortunately held some doubts about Jesus and when the wind blew, and he was drowning, he was left with no alternative option but only a cry to Jesus to save

him. Peter's doubt is echoed in Jesus' rebuke 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?'

Peter and his colleagues as professional fishermen, had been shattered from their familiar territory, the daily water storms they had been used to succumb to. But here was something amazing.... the very real threat to their lives was obedient to Jesus. 'When they got into the boat, the wind ceased.' This happened because the wind recognised its Master – Jesus, King of the Universe being present on the scene.

Just as the disciples were battered by the water waves, the storms of their time, we too have our storms, our waves that stir us to doubt especially when everything like for Peter, doesn't seem to unfold in the way of our expectation, stirring us to cry for help.

This matter is real in the face of traumatic events, when we mourn the loss of loved ones or when we encounter difficult life situations in which we feel abandoned and the intervention of our God seems absent. How do we address these life situations? There are no easy answers except to hold onto Jesus.

As we undertake our Australian National census now onboard, like the disciples on the boat, we are given the opportunity to confess our allegiance to Jesus as the Son of God, especially as Christians. The choice is yours and mine to make.

The disciples fortunately had a firsthand experience of being with Jesus and their life experience led them to recognise him as 'the Son of God.'

You and I are invited strive to recognise Jesus in our daily lives and with the help of God's Spirit be guided to identify and worship him as the True 'Son of God' for our salvation. **The Lord be with you.**