

Seeing anew

Heather Smith *reflects on*
Matthew 14:22-33

Commentators on this story about Jesus walking on the water very often focus on faith. Peter steps out in faith on to the water, but it fails him and he begins to sink. But in the earlier part of the story we read about weary sailors whose boat has been battered by the winds all night, who now find themselves far from land. When they see Jesus coming towards them their exhausted minds imagine they are seeing a ghost. The alternative, a human being walking on water, is not something they can even begin to process. A ghost is the most likely explanation that their experience and understanding of life can produce.

It is very easy to see only what we are accustomed to seeing, or to interpret what we see and hear based on old, familiar patterns. But God is constantly bringing something new, if only we see it. How often we forget that the Christian life is all about transformation and change. God wants to bring us different perspectives that change our understanding of the world around us. We often see only the old ghosts that haunt us with incidents and feelings from the past. God sends something alive and new, with infinite possibilities, if we grasp them with faith. 🌿



God, you blow the wind of change across our lives. Help us to feel the breeze it brings and, refreshed, move forward in new ways. Amen.

Water

Part 2 – the Spirit over the waters

by Caroline Hodgson

Before the first light dawned, Genesis (1:2) tells us that, “a wind from God swept over the face of the waters”. This poetic image places water at the very beginning of creation – the raw material of life and a symbol of God’s creative potential. Out of those waters God brought land and living things.

Even now, water continues to shape the world – rivers carve valleys and the tides continuously reshape our

coastal areas. In the same way, God’s Spirit still moves over the waters of our life – sometimes calm, sometimes turbulent – an eternal cycle of creation and re-creation.

We meet this elemental force daily, yet it remains mysterious. The water that touches our hands and lips today has circled the planet countless times. In water we glimpse something of God’s eternal presence – moving, renewing, bringing life where once there was “a formless void”. 🌿

International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples

by Alan Jefferies

“I believe God lives in us through the joy and power we sense when we swing high.” This quote comes from Sr José Hobday – a Franciscan sister and theologian of Seneca heritage, who is known for combining Christian spirituality with Native American wisdom.

Today marks International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples, when we are invited to reflect on justice, dignity and neighbourly love. Indigenous communities often face pressure on their lands and livelihoods. In

Australia, for example, many First Nations leaders are working to protect sacred sites while inviting churches to walk with them towards reconciliation.

We are called to the practical pursuit of a lasting and meaningful peace. When Christians honour the image of God in every culture they affirm diversity as a gift. More than an observance, a day such as this becomes an opportunity to act with compassion and courage – and Sr Jose’s words remind us of the joy derived from doing so. www.un.org/en/observances/indigenous-day 🌿

“He saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.”

Titus 3:5