

SUNDAY PLUS

God of faithfulness



With us always
By Chee Yan Shek

Storms can be frightening. Waves crashing. Winds howling. Rain lashing. No idea of when it is going to end.

I had the opportunity to walk the Camino Frances in 2021. Before I went, I surrendered to God all the aspects of the pilgrimage. I did not plan my walking distances, where I was going to stay each day, nor did I have a timeframe. All I knew was that my hope was to arrive at Santiago de Compostela. I surrendered and trusted the unknown to God.

One year later, God called me to walk the Camino de Fatima. It was interesting to observe the fears that came to the surface before the pilgrimage. How far will I walk, where will I stay, what if...? I was overwhelmed by my own fears and I lost my focus on God. These temporary fears were only a reflection of deeper fears in my heart. It is in these moments when I must invite Jesus into the storms of my heart and ask him to reveal where these fears come from.

Jesus is our anchor in the midst of the storm. Once we focus our eyes on him, we can find peace even while the storm continues to rage around us. There are lessons in each storm and in God's time the storm will pass. It is not about praying the storms away but about asking God to provide us with the tools and skills to persevere through each one. God is with us always.

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God has a real face, he has a name: God is mercy, God is faithfulness, he is life which is given to us all.

Pope Francis

Hand-in-hand

By Michael George

School sports days are marked in the calendar months in advance and are eagerly anticipated by many.

Seeking to organise a successful event, there is a key factor that is beyond control: the weather. If it is either dry or raining solidly an organiser's decision is straightforward: it is clear whether the event can go ahead or not. Morning drizzle causes headaches and risk = cancel and risk

finding skies later brightening and the grass drying – or press ahead and risk the rain becoming persistent and the ground slippery.

I once faced this dilemma, but received counsel from a colleague, a wise Sister. "Michael, have more faith. Trust God. It's going to be fine," she said.

Sure enough, she was right. From dark skies, the drizzle stopped and we enjoyed a lovely afternoon. What I had needed but lacked, but the wise Sister had, was the faith to have trusted.

Michael George has worked in Catholic schools in the south of England for 25 years, as teacher, headteacher and chaplain.

Feast of the week
Monday 24 June

The Nativity of St John the Baptist

How did the unexpectedly speechless Zechariah tell Elizabeth that an angel had said they were to become parents? What did the neighbours have to say in the inevitable gossip? When John was born, everybody expected him to receive his father's name or that of a relative. Nobody had expected his father to suddenly speak and give his son a name that they hadn't anticipated. Life would be different for this new baby! How well did John and Jesus know each other? We hear very little about Jesus' childhood and nothing about John's, and so we can only speculate that, as both families regularly travelled to Jerusalem for major feasts, they might have met from time to time. Nazareth and John's birthplace of Ain Karem are about ninety miles apart, so the cousins probably shared little of their growing up. Yet, of John, Jesus declared, "among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist".

Lord my God, I love you. Let me celebrate your presence in my life and in the beautiful world which you have given to us.
☩ Amen.

Today:
Job 38:1-8-11
2 Corinthians 5:14-17
Mark 4:35-41

Monday:
Isaiah 40:1-6
Acts 13:22-26
Luke 1:67-68, 80

Tuesday:
2 Kings 10:9-11,
14-21, 31-36
Matthew 7:6,
12-14

Wednesday:
2 Kings 22:9-19; 23:1-9
Matthew 7:15-20

Thursday:
2 Kings 24:6-17
Matthew 7:21-29

Friday:
2 Kings 25:1-12
Matthew 8:1-4

Saturday: E&W, S
Lamentations 2:2, 10-14, 18-19
Matthew 8:5-17

Next Sunday:
Acts 12:1-11
2 Timothy 4:6-8,
17-18
Matthew 10:13-19