

**Ordinary V 10th Feb. 2019 ChCh-St.Luke's & St. Mary's Addington**

**Readings: 1 Cor. 15:1-11**

**Luke 5:1-11**

**Reflection:**

It has been a momentous week – in our diocese and in our nation. Our new bishop has been ordained and installed at the helm of our waka (and what a great celebration it was, as – in front of the Cathedral in the Square - we welcomed the one who has been called by God to be our shepherd and wise leader, called to navigate our future journey in Christ).

Meanwhile, fires have raged in the Tasman district (and in some areas continue to rage - challenging the sense of security and place which we *all* need to thrive – we continue to pray for all those affected, particularly those who have been *forced* to set aside belongings and leave their homes).

Also this week, Waitangi Day has again offered us the opportunity to reflect on our shared history with the tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Alongside, and intertwined with the history of European colonization of the long white cloud, and Te Tiriti O Waitangi, is the story of Christianity – and in particular Anglicanism – introduced both to and by Maori in the nineteenth century.

One particularly powerful story from that time, is that of twelve-year-old Tarore and her gospel of Luke which she received from her mission school. Tarore's little gospel book found its way into the hands of warrior chief Te Rauparaha, at Otaki, following her murder by a warrior from a Te Arawa raiding party. Te Rauparaha's son Tamihana and nephew Te Whiwhi were later to bring Tarore's gospel taonga with its message of peace and reconciliation *by boat* to the South Island, re-visiting many places earlier ravaged by Tamihana's murderous father.

The vital significance of boats in our shared Maori & pakeha, colonial & Christian history goes without saying: the ‘Ann’ and the ‘Active’ associated with Samuel Marsden and Nga Puhi chief Ruatara, and the First Four Ships to the Canterbury Settlement. There were many waka in constant use, including for the passage of supplies to colonial settlements, even following the establishment of rail and road in some areas, even following the confiscation of Maori lands.

Most, if not all, of us will have significant boats and journeys featured in our ancestral stories. (Our new bishop spoke yesterday of his own whanau not quite making the first four ships, but being pretty close!). I have deep respect for my grandparents .....and parents for setting down their proverbial nets, leaving their ‘homeland’ and sailing into the unknowns of the southern hemisphere. Even the tangata whenua first left Hawaiiki, navigating Pacific waters by traditional methods, to reach this land.

This year at Waitangi, renowned navigator and master waka builder, Sir Heke-nukumai Busby - credited with reviving traditional Māori seafaring - was officially knighted. Sir Hek is committed to passing on his skills and knowledge to today’s young people.

In today’s gospel reading – we hear one of the three gospel accounts of Jesus calling the fishermen to be his disciples. But only in *Luke’s* gospel account, do we hear the story of Jesus’ need of Simon’s *boat* to teach the crowd gathered at the lake’s edge, and of Jesus’ encouragement to Simon Peter to “put out into the deep”. (I wonder what Simon the experienced fisherman thought, as Jesus - a carpenter’s son - instructed him in the ways of fishing.) The resulting daytime catch that followed the fishermen’s unsuccessful nocturnal fishing trip must have left them incredulous.

Interestingly, we meet a similar but post-resurrection story at the end of John's gospel, when Jesus encourages the despondent fishermen to cast their net on the other side of the boat. They take a large haul of fish and share breakfast on the beach, blessed and distributed by the risen Jesus. It seems the disciples needed another reminder of Jesus's continued presence and power in their lives.

In Luke's gospel, Simon is busy cleaning the nets while Jesus addresses the crowd - just going about his daily tasks, yet Jesus calls him into the boat *with* him and challenges him to put out into the deep, challenges him to do what seems futile. I can relate to that! Perhaps you can too. It's usually when I'm busy with the daily tasks of life, that Jesus calls.....and challenges me.

Put out into the deep Helen, say you're sorry, *release* that commitment, smile at that stranger, offer your skills on that committee, pick up that hitchhiker, accept that new role..... *'but Jesus, I'm tired, I've tried that already, I'm not worthy, there must be someone else'*.....but He keeps calling: "put out into the deep, I'm in the boat with you, you can do it! And what's more...I can't do it Helen, without your boat!"

Does that sound familiar?! Joy Cowley puts it this way.... *'I am being pulled two ways. There is a voice in my heart which calls me to journey out there in deep waters, while another voice in my head tells me to stay close to a safe and familiar shore.....The voice of the heart is gentle and as quiet as moonlight. All that it says is "Come!" but its pull is very strong and my heart strains away from my head in deep longing.....May I learn to read*

*the tide, and know when to cast off the moorings to sail those deep and uncharted waters of God's infinite love.*<sup>i</sup>

Just as Jesus called and challenged Peter, at the very beginnings of Christian discipleship, *so* he calls us – individually and collectively. Just as Jesus called young Tarore..... *and* her murderer; just as Jesus called Tamihana Te Rauparaha; just as he called Samuel Marsden & Nga Puhi chief Ruatara; just as he has called our new Bishop Peter, so he calls me and you and us.....

....into the deep.....with him. How will we respond?

Let us pray.....

Dear Lord,

Please climb into our boat

Especially when we're preoccupied

With our daily living

Draw us into the deep waters

Beyond our own realities and expectations

Especially when we're dejected and tired

Encourage us to cast our net

Into the depths of your abundance

discovering there, our empty God-space

awaiting your filling

And when you call us to fresh horizons

Gift us the courage to set down  
all we have accumulated,  
to release all that enmeshes us

.....and follow you, the God of peace, justice and Love.

Amen.

---

<sup>i</sup> Joy Cowley, from 'Tension' p.46-7, Psalms Down Under, Pleroma Christian Supplies (NZ) Ltd, 2004