

# SUNDAY PLUS



LIVERPOOL 2018  
ADOREMUS

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## Strength in weakness

by Fr Denis  
Blackledge SJ

As today is Sea Sunday, let's first remember to pop in a prayer or two for all our sisters and brothers who spend much of their lives on water. It's so easy to take for granted all the goods we buy in stores from supersize to small: many of them will have come to our islands by sea. And think of all those who work on cruise ships, often away from home for months at a time. Given the perils of the sea in all its moods, I'm sure their prayer often ties in with Paul's in today's Second Reading: "It's when I am weak that I'm strong."



No wonder Jesus had a tough time when he returned home to Nazareth, and had to bear insults and non-acceptance. After all, he'd led a quiet, uneventful life working, as a carpenter before he went off and started creating a stir with what he said and did. His challenge to religious authority by his words and

deeds set him aside. He became an outsider, not "one-of-us", even on his home ground. "Who does he think he is, telling us what to do?" they muttered. And a hurt Jesus said: "A prophet is only despised in his own country among his own relations and in his own house."

Have you noticed how often Christians who dare to stand out and up

for their faith – in other words, modern-day prophets – are often treated badly by other so-called Christians? Has it happened to you yet?

*Fr Denis Blackledge SJ is parish priest of St Francis Xavier, Liverpool. He was Religious Adviser to Sean Bean for the BBC1 series Broken.*

## A life on the ocean wave

by Greg Watts

Even though Bryony Watson had grown up by the sea, she had only ever thought about ships as dots on the horizon. But since becoming an Apostleship of the Sea (AoS), port chaplain in Immingham and Grimsby, she has learned that so much of what we buy in our high street – coffee, bananas, computers, fridges – arrives in the UK by sea.

Bryony's role is to offer practical help and pastoral care to the seafarers she meets. Most work long hours in tough conditions and don't see their families for months.

One particular ship visit has stayed in her mind. "I was met by the second officer, who was from Crimea and was slumped in a chair at the watch station. His clothes were ripped and dirty and he looked haggard."

"He couldn't leave his station so I stood on the deck of the ship and listened while he talked about his wife and young daughter, whom he missed terribly. There was very little I could do, other than listen. That visit showed me that chaplaincy is being present, being there, whether that means standing on a cold deck in the rain for an hour, or chatting over coffee in a mess room."

*To learn more about the Apostleship of the Sea, go to [www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk](http://www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk)*

“**I entrust sailors, fishermen, and all those in difficulty on the seas far away from home, to the motherly protection of Mary, Star of the Sea.**

Pope Francis

## Storm at sea

by Sr Janet Fearn  
FMDM

When an earthquake struck Valparaiso on 16 August 1906 at 19:55 local time, my twenty-year-old grandfather was on board ship in Valparaiso harbour. Miraculously the ship did not sink, enabling him and other crew members to go ashore to help with the search, rescue and burials of the earthquake's victims.

Three months earlier, on 26 May 1906, the ship on which he was apprenticed, *The Queen of Cambria*, sank at Lobos de Tierra on passage from Lobos to Antwerp with a cargo of guano. Fortunately, the crew survived.

Over the centuries, ship design has developed far beyond our imagining but those who make their living on the high seas remain vulnerable to the effects of the wind and the waves.

"We know the sea and we respect her," one fisherman remarked. "It's those who don't respect her who take risks and find themselves in trouble."

Those words of wisdom apply to more than just seafarers, don't they?

*Sr Janet Fearn is a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood.*

**Lord of the wind and the waves, be with all those who work at sea and those whom you place in their care. Grant them fair weather, good sailing and a happy homecoming. Amen.**

Today:  
Ezekiel 2:2-5  
2 Corinthians 12:7-10  
Mark 6:1-6

Monday:  
Hosea 2:16-18, 21-22  
Matthew 9:18-26

Tuesday:  
Hosea 8:4-7, 11-13  
Matthew 9:32-38

Wednesday:  
Hosea 10:1-3, 7-8, 12  
Matthew 10:1-7

Thursday:  
Hosea 11:1-4, 8-9  
Matthew 10:7-15

Friday:  
Hosea 14:2-10  
Matthew 10:16-23

Saturday:  
Isaiah 6:1-8  
Matthew 10:24-33

Next Sunday:  
Amos 7:12-15  
Ephesians 1:3-14  
Mark 6:7-13

