**14 B 2018**

There is a very famous story called “The little fish”, that is told by the great Jesuit writer, Anthony de Mello: It goes,

“Excuse me” said the little ocean fish. “You are older than I am so can you tell me where to find this thing they call the ocean?”

“The ocean”, said the older fish, “is the thing you are swimming around in right now”.

“What, this? But this is water. What I’m seeking is the ***ocean***” said the disappointed little fish as he swam away to search elsewhere.

Jesus was facing just this problem in Nazareth where he’d been brought up. The Jews were looking for the Messiah alright, but they couldn’t imagine that he would come from Nazareth, of all places. In any case, “Jesus? .. But he’s that carpenter bloke; his father was a carpenter; he can’t possibly be the one we are looking for.” They thought that the Messiah would come from the skies leading a vast army who would at the very least overcome the Roman occupying forces and then go on to make Israel great. So, a little bit like the little fish, they continued to look elsewhere when all the time Jesus was right there in their midst, and he was the Messiah that they were looking for.

And of course we do this all the time. We don’t need to be looking out for heroes on expeditions around the world when we can look to the people who for instance, live with serious illness. They face danger and death all the time. They really are heroes and there are many of them in our midst in Holy Cross. We don’t always need to look very far for wisdom – to specialists and consultants and professionals and so on, when often we can look to senior wise members of our own family or community. We don’t need to look out for friendship and community through the Internet, Facebook, chat rooms and the rest, when we can build it and celebrate it here in our own families and in our own parish.

But most crucially we don’t need to look out for God’s presence in incredible or miraculous events around the world when we can look into our own lives where we will find that he lives in the quiet centre of our being. We don’t need to look for him in the depths of emotional experiences when we can find him in everyday experiences. We don’t need to go to monasteries high up on mountain tops. We should know that he lives with us in our living rooms. But we miss him all the time and we miss what he says to us all the time. He is speaking all day long.

That is why it is so important at the end of the day to press the pause button for 5 minutes in our lives, and looking back over the day to list at least five moments or events or encounters in the day when he may just have been trying to tell you something about himself or about your self. With insight we can see him, in conscience we can hear him, with patience we can get to know him and with humility we can live with him.

We don’t need to be like the silly little fish looking all over the place for the ocean