

Views from the Pews - Beginnings

With Advent's anticipation of new things, and contingent call to 'wake up', still echoing (Isa: 25), what is top of mind as we embark on 2026? In Gen:1 we see a God of beginnings. The creation story, whether seven literal days or ongoing, is irrelevant to one immutable fact; God is the source of all things new, and the Word the source of all things made. (Jn 1:1-3)

As God's children, created in God's image and integral to an ongoing creation story, are we found waiting with spirits receptive to new opportunities? Could we value comfort and familiarity more than the excitement of promptings towards new beginnings, muttering 'these are not meant' for us? If so, who then, will God use in this age?

When facing challenging opportunities, we can draw encouragement and inspiration from Scripture. Jesus challenged Peter with the single word 'Come' (Mat 14:28-31). Only when Peter, eyes fixed on Jesus not the turbulent water, accepted the challenge, did he manage the impossible. 'Come' calls for obedience, yet our focus on the turbulence around us keeps us 'stuck' in our boat, unaware we stand on a shore of invitation to things not yet experienced. Risk, often thought of as foe rather than ally, may be the very impetus we need. (Rm 3:11)

Noah defied a turbulent, wicked world (Gen: 7), following God's call to build and fill an ark in mountainous Ararat with all living creatures. Abram hearing the singular 'Go' sought a foreign land and God blessed him with multiple descendants (Gen: 12). Our bidding to 'the new' may not be dramatic, yet it is indeed our Godly calling, actioned when we trust God. (Jn 14 :27) Our liturgy and prayer of confession remind us, even in failure, due to disobedience God, through Jesus, the 'pioneer of our salvation', gives new beginnings. We, like the Israelites, are never forsaken if we turn obediently to God.

Beginnings may come like a thunder bolt or, like Jesus's ministry, be birthed over thirty years of obedience, and finally proclaimed by a 'Voice in the Wilderness' (Mt 3). Ps 24:7-10, exhorts 'Lift up your heads, open wide the gates, so the King of Glory may enter, as Lord, strong and mighty, revealing God's majesty and power; come to dwell among us'. Are our spiritual listening skills attuned to recognise such calls, awakening in us 'new beginnings' proclaiming God's majesty and power?

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