



25th January 2026



3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Change – A Necessary Part of Life – Embrace It!

How good are we at adapting to change? We often feel uncomfortable when our plans for the day are disrupted or changed; I know it challenges me when suddenly I am faced with a change of plan for my day.

Our struggling world is full of change and not always for good, unfortunately. As we grow older and wiser, maybe wiser, we often yearn for a time when things were predictable, especially when we were younger. We look back to our school days where we had a set routine, for me, school during the week of course, and Saturdays off to the beach with my friends and Sundays, church and then my sister, mum and I would visit my grandparents for a lamb roast. My father worked weekends, and I can remember picking him up from work on our way home. So many changes happen during our lives, remember the old telephones that went through a local exchange, cars have changed so much and mobile phones, whenever they do an update, I have to almost learn all over again.

My Mum told me a story about getting home really late one evening with her sister, mind you she was about twenty at the time, but my grandfather had insisted that they be home at 10pm and it was now midnight. She needed to go to the bathroom and they had an old toilet with a chain to flush, she pulled the chain and then remembered that when she let go the whole neighbourhood would be woken to the loud rumbling and rushing of water as the cistern refilled, her father would check his bedside clock, and they would be in big trouble. So even toilet systems have changed over the years. When I began my nursing training in Sydney, everything changed, living away from home, meeting new people, I didn't know a soul, every shift was unpredictable, we might have admissions, a death and we needed to cope with that along with our normal daily routine.

We see in our Gospel reading this morning the huge changes that Jesus implemented as he began his ministry in Galilee. When Jesus heard that John had been arrested he left Nazareth and made His home in Capernaum by the sea. This fulfilled the words that had been spoken by the prophet

Isaiah. From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near". As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, He began to call his first disciples, Jesus saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother. They were casting their nets into the sea as they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people". Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As Jesus went from there, he saw two other brothers, James, son of Zebedee and his brother John, both in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and He called them. Immediately the brothers left the boat and their father and followed Him.

These men's lives were changed forever. They didn't question, they just followed Jesus. They had no idea what would happen, where they would live, how they would eat or what their daily life would look like. They obviously trusted Jesus and were prepared to give up all to follow him. Trust and obey as the hymn says. We are not usually required to meet such an extreme challenge, although we are often expected to answer a call as we follow Jesus, a call that we don't expect or necessarily wish to accept for whatever reason. We might find it too much of a challenge, we might feel outside our comfort zone, it may interfere with our usual routines, or, do we have the necessary skills to complete the task? Rest assured if Jesus asks you to do something, He will equip you with everything that you need. Once again this is a trust and obey thing.

We need to pray about whatever it is, don't rush into it, Jesus will support and encourage you.

I remember reading a short story by Stephen Cottrell, it was about two men sawing wood. One man kept stopping to have a rest and sharpen his saw. The other man went flat out and just kept working. At the end of the day, the man who kept stopping had sawn loads more wood than his companion. Why? Because he had stopped to sharpen his saw and to have short breaks and therefore he was able to cut a lot more wood as his saw was always sharp and he was refreshed.

Take time to sit quietly with Jesus, especially before you start your day, this will allow His peace and love to strengthen and support you, this is not wasted time, it will equip you to complete your day in the best possible way. I know we all think that we have so much to do in the coming day that we need to just jump out of bed and get going. No, please, take time to sit quietly with Jesus, you will be amazed at the way your day unfolds. Remember, Jesus always knows best.

We need not be afraid of change, we can change if we need to, there will always be changes, Bishop Brian Farran said that in our churches we need, "Deep change or there will be slow death". This year we will have to make changes to the ministry centre as you will have noticed at morning tea following church on Sunday we have a huge, noisy crowd, which is wonderful, it means that our congregation wants to spend time with each other, and to support and encourage each other on our Christian journey. So, we need to explore some different options to allow for more space in this area. We will come up with a solution. It is wonderful to see our congregation steadily growing, with a need to expand this space.

In conclusion, please do not be afraid of change, treat it as a challenge, work at your own pace, and ask lots of questions and don't assume that the changes don't include you. Many changes apply to our secular lives as well as our Christian journey. Step out in faith, do not be afraid, how many times do we hear Jesus say that.

Take it on board and face every challenge with a thankful heart, knowing that whatever you do in Jesus' name will be amazing.

Amen