



**Can life truly be exciting during this Covid-19?  
Are we joyful despite the strong currents of life?  
Catholics are to be living dynamic and exciting lives.**



Life is an ocean and we meet it at its pounding surf. The waves never stop. Eventually they will overwhelm us and we will succumb to their relentless pounding. Our choice is whether we will ride the waves for as long as we can, or whether we will try to control the ocean. Was it worth the danger for the thrilling rides? For some, yes! But this is simply a metaphor, and the metaphor is what is important here. The question is not whether we like body-surfing; it is whether we will plunge into the ocean of life. Will we find the waves and find joy in what we cannot control? Or, will we stand on the edge of the shore shouting instructions that get lost in the wind? Trying to control this ocean is a sure path to frustration, disappointment and bitterness.

***“I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.”***

*- John 15:11*



**If we are walking through a difficult season right now, ask ourselves:**

Are we focused on the wind and waves, or on Jesus?

Do we believe that Jesus is greater than circumstances and can be trusted?

**If we're not walking through a difficult season right now, ask ourselves:**

Are we ready to trust Him? Are we postured for dependence or independence?

Are we feeding a pride in any way; a sense of *"I got this."*

### ***To Surf With God***

Think of the great wounds of our life and we are quickly in touch with what we could not control in spite of our preferences. And yet, we devote vast amounts of our energy to make life (and other people) respond to our demands, building up those frustrations and wounds. Truly, we cannot control all the circumstances of our lives, but we can decide to surf upon them. Peter is the one who decides to surf the waves of what he cannot control. He asks to join Jesus walking on the waves and then also discovers terror when it actually begins to happen. On the same night on which Jesus is going to be betrayed, knows what is ahead of him. What does he say to his disciples? Fearful warnings? Not at all. Jesus says, **"I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete."** (John 15:11)

Or look at Paul and Silas. They are in prison. If we perceive prison conditions are bad, believe me, there was no society for the improvement of penal conditions in Palestine 2,000 years ago. There they are in jail at midnight, and what do they do? **It is recorded that they gave themselves a hymn to sing. (Acts 16:25)**

Allegedly there are uncounted millions of Christians right *now* who are going through life without any sort of real, vibrant kick. What would be the good antidote to lacklustre Catholic life? The Catholic life should be riding through life on a surfboard with God. If you want to surf with God, get out to where the big waves are. There are two basic tenets of surfing:

**1. Get out to where the big waves are.** If you want to surf, you cannot spend your time paddling around the little pools up on the shore. You have to get out where the big waves are. Take the scene from Acts 5:17-42. This is the story of the infant Church. Peter and John and many others were imprisoned. They have been charged to stop preaching. Of course, they refused, saying that they could not disobey God for fear of man. (Acts 5:29).

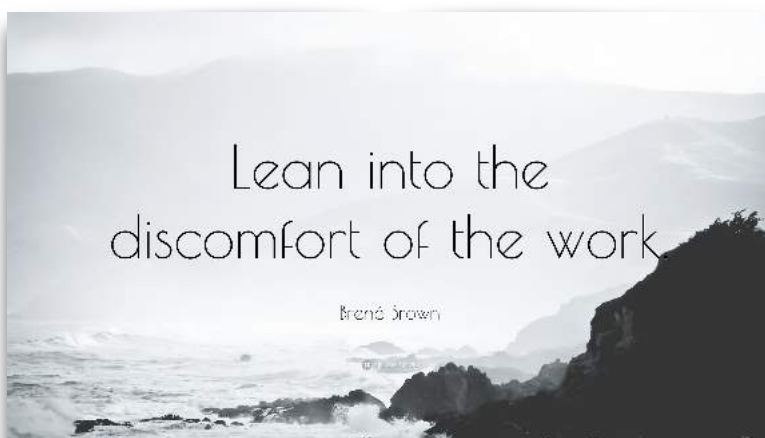
Their preaching was so effective and bold, and God used it so mightily, that the Church continued to grow at an alarming rate despite being incarcerated. The apostles were arrested from out there in the 'big waves' to bear witness. It would remind us that in the New Testament, the word for "witness" is translated as "martyr." They were not only laying down their lips, they were laying down their very lives for the sake of Jesus Christ.

**2. To ride the waves with God, you must lean into it.** When we get in the big waves where the big issues are, we have to lean into the waves. That is what the disciples did. It was not just getting out there. It was doing the job when they were there. It was becoming involved. It was leaning into the thing. The waves build up, you ride behind it, and then just as it begins to crest, you climb to the top of that crest and you ride the current. And you hear the whole roaring of the waves behind us, because it understands itself to be in a race with us and we are winning.

### ***Be proactive and lean into the wave***

It's a magnificent experience to be riding the curl of the wave. But to do it you have got to be proactive and lean into the wave.

- If Mary had not been proactive, she would never have broken the alabaster jar and with that honorific ointment anointed the feet of Jesus (Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14: 6-9; John 12:1-8 and Luke 7: 36-39).
- If those four men were not proactive, they would never have torn a hole in the roof to bring their friend to the healing hands of Jesus (Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12).
- If Matthew would not have been proactive; he would not have got up from that table and left the tax ledges and his coins behind (Matthew 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17 and Luke 5:27-28).
- If Jozef de Veuster better known as Fr Damien of Molokai would not have been proactive, he would not have served the lepers until he himself became a leper.





*“I have done  
what was mine  
to do, may  
Christ now  
teach you what  
you are to do”*

- St Francis of Assisi



The Catholic faith is supposed to be a mixture of burning excitement and vibrancy. This is what we find in the New Testament, and that's what is to be found in you and me. This brings us to our own personal moment to risk ourselves in something bigger, to find excitement and drama which makes life worth living. Moment that we risk everything and moving out of the shell of cowardice and *take a stand* or lean into that big wave. If Catholics, then, are involved in faith in every dimension of our lives, why when it comes to the big and the most significant issues of our time, do we back off? What we ought to be doing is riding the wave. That takes commitment, loyalty and discipline during this Covid-19 pandemic.

Those who piddle around with life never know big moments. Comfort first instead of **risk taking**. Thrifty first instead of **extravagant commitment**. Business first instead of **blessing first**. Me first instead of **faith first**. Adults just playing safe in the poolside are meant for infants. They remain spiritual infants and shallow in their Catholic life. We have all met people who were adults in terms of years yet acted like children: irresponsible, impulsive, inconsiderate and unwise in the decisions they made. They are immature no matter their age. Infantile faith, still needing milk of infants. *“I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready”* (1 Corinthians 3:2). Look at our spiritual life five years ago and then look today and see if there are any little difference. *“I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather... as infants in Christ”* (1 Corinthians 3:1).

It is tragic when a child fails to develop into a capable, mature adult. It's like the greatest moment that you can know in surfing. When you get into one of the truly big waves and ride through the wave and say – Yes to God's dares. Any true devoted Catholic knows that we should never be weary in serving Christ. It makes the whole ride we call life, worth living, and the waves worth surfing. There are those who have planned their lives out very carefully. Nice little job. Nice little marriage. Nice little children: one little boy and one little girl. Nice little retirement plan. Nice little house and nice little car. We know what the end of that story is? It's a nice little mound and a nice little tomb stone with a nice little name on it and few nice dates underneath. Pampering ourselves into mediocrity and playing safe. **Don't do that!**

Instead, be part of the legions of witnesses: men and women who have run the race, ride the waves and walk through the storms. A stark reminder from 2 Timothy 4:7-8 when St Paul eloquently said, *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”* In St Francis of Assisi's own words, *“I have done what was mine to do, may Christ now teach you what you are to do.”*