

Sermon Given at the Anglican Parish of Kingscliff - 5th Sunday of Easter, 03 May 2026

Title: The Way Through Troubled

Waters; Scripture Passage: John 14:1-14

Friends, Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Look at the person next to you for a moment. Now look at me. Every single person in this church has a story. A story of joy, yes, but also a story of sorrow, of confusion, and of change.

Last week, I shared with you my journey from Nigeria to Australia—the visa crisis, the loneliness, the struggle of those first few years. Today, I want to continue that story. Not to dwell on the pain, but to give you a testimony. A testimony about one thing: God's absolute, relentless faithfulness. Because the bedrock of our faith is God's faithfulness.

I want to tell you about a crisis that forced me to learn the meaning of Jesus' words in John 14: *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me."*

After all those years of struggle, God opened a door. I was accepted by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. I studied theology in Sydney, finished in 2007, and was ordained a deacon, then a priest. I served in Queanbeyan, Calwell, Gowrie, Tuggeranong, and eventually my first parish in Merimbula, Pambula, Eden, Wyndham and Kiah on the far south coast of NSW.

On paper, I had arrived. I was a priest. I was serving God's people. But towards the end of my second year in that beautiful coastal parish, I had a personal and health crisis. I had visited my mum in Nigeria, and on the bus ride, I used a dirty toilet. I contracted a bacterial infection. By November 1st, 2011, I had sepsis.

I nearly died. I was rushed to hospital and stayed for six days. The doctor told me to take a month off. In that month, I got a dog—Ollie. And at the end of that month, I knew I couldn't just go back to normal. I needed to pray. I needed to seek God's will for my life.

I went to the Carmelite monastery in Ormiston, Brisbane. Then, feeling a strange pull, I went into Brisbane to see St. John's Cathedral which had just been completed. I met the Dean, Peter Catt. I told him about my personal crisis. And he told me his own story—that he started as a Roman Catholic and became an Anglican.

He gave me a few contacts, and one of them was Bishop Garry, the Anglican Bishop of Ballarat. For seven months, I discerned with him and in prayer. And in 2012, I made the most difficult decision of my life: to move from Catholicism to Anglicanism.

Let me be honest with you. It felt like death. I lost friends. I lost relationships with some family members. The accusations came: "You are a traitor. You are lost. The Anglicans have paid you to join them." But my mother stood by me. A few faithful friends stood by me. And I discovered something profound. This wasn't a diminishment. It was an enrichment. Like being Nigerian and Australia, I became a better Christian as a former Roman Catholic who is now Anglican.

Jesus said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” Easy to say, hard to do when your world is collapsing. But I learned that trusting God doesn't mean the path is straight. It means the destination is secure. I served in Ballarat for nine years. I served two parishes. And then, on a trip to Nigeria I met my wife. We were married in 2015. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Why do I tell you this story of toilets, sepsis, conversion, and marriage? Because looking back, I now realised that the Lord held me through it all. His love and mercy saw me through.

St. John Henry Newman said it best: “To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.” You are not the same person you were five years ago. And you won't be the same person five years from now. We are constantly moving. From Nigeria to Australia. From priesthood in one church to ministry in another. From health to sickness.

In this constant movement, Jesus gives us three anchors in John 14 verse 6.

First, He is the Way. If I give you directions—turn left at this street, then right, then left again—you might get confused. But if I say, “Follow me. I have walked this road before,” you can relax. Jesus has walked our road. He has been through rejection. He has been through physical agony. He has been through the grave. He is the Way. With Jesus we will never be lost.

Second, He is the Truth. In Jesus, what He says and what He does are the same thing. No hypocrisy. When you build your life on Him, you build on reality, not illusion. The truth of who you are—beloved, forgiven, called, saved—is only found in Him.

Third, He is the Life. Not a half-life. Not a life of mere material things. But my whole life. Eternal life starting now. The life that survived my sepsis. The life that survived my career change. The life that survives every grave we walk past.

Today, as we celebrate Domestic Awareness Sunday, we must apply this.

If Jesus is the Way, we must walk a way of safety for the vulnerable.

If Jesus is the Truth, we cannot hide the lies of abuse in our families.

If Jesus is the Life, we must defend life in all its fullness—especially for women, men and children who live not in a peaceful home, but a warzone.

Let us ask the Lord to reveal the truth of who we are. So that we can see and defend His image in all those who suffer abuse and violence.

So, my friends. Your heart might be troubled today. Your career might be shifting. Your health might be failing. Your family might have rejected you. Your relationship might be in crisis.

Listen to Jesus. He is not just giving directions. He is the road. He is not just giving facts. He is the truth. He is not just promising a future. He is the life.

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. Trust in Jesus. He has gone ahead to prepare your room. And He will come back for you and for me. Put your hands in His hands for His hands are wonderful hands. Amen.

The Reverend Constantine Osuchukwu, AMDG, 03 May 2026.