

Archbishop Smith: 'They Need an Anchor'



An image of the tabernacle inside Archbishop Smith's chapel. On top is the image of an anchor with two dolphins swimming towards it. Photo: Supplied by Archbishop Richard Smith.

"They Need an Anchor"

Those were the words spoken by one of the panelists in our most recent panel discussion. One in a series following upon the issuance of *On the Impact of COVID-19 and the Call to Christian Renewal*, this episode revolved around the topic "Solidarity and Vulnerability." In the course of our reflections upon the experience among most people these days of acute vulnerability, a panelist put her finger on it by saying, "They need an anchor." We all do. People are searching for that which will keep them securely in place while the strong waves of ambiguity and uncertainty threaten to unmoor us and cast us adrift. These are very unsettling times, to say the least.

This insight from the panelist put me in mind of the tabernacle in my chapel. Placed above the Chi Rho, an ancient symbol for Christ, is the image of an anchor with two dolphins swimming towards it. The anchor we seek and need is Jesus Christ. His steadfast and victorious love holds us fast. The swiftness of the dolphins symbolizes the speed with which the Christian should go to Christ and allow him to anchor our lives.

Speed, though, is not exactly what comes to mind when we think in general terms of the response to the virus. We need a vaccine and cure, and it is taking a long time for them to be developed. Likewise are many people seemingly slow to respond to preventative measures stipulated by medical officials, as evidenced

in the surge of late in positive cases. These are realities in the face of which many people feel helpless or powerless to control, and this causes anxiety to spread and deepen. What we can control, however, is our own response. We are learning, please God, that, although we keep saying "we are in this together," nevertheless we cannot go it alone. To think we can be our own anchor is to surrender to illusion. We need Jesus Christ; he alone is the one and only sure anchor for our lives. Let us go to him without hesitation – swiftly as the dolphin – and allow him to hold us fast by the power of his love.