

A story about travelling through the eye of the storm

MANY years ago when I first started to visit ships I met a captain who I got talking to. We talked for a long time about all sorts of things. Towards the end of our chat I asked him if he believed in God. He paused for a moment and then he told me a story:

His ship had just set sail and was about to cross the North Sea and head towards Norway. After a few hours, all was going well but heavy weather was setting in. Rain lashed the ship, the sea started to swell and the wind started to blow.

The captain had just come through a tiring few days and after having dinner, he hoped to be able to rest in his cabin.

However, as time passed the weather got worse. Waves crashed over the ship and the wind howled outside. The officer on watch started to get worried and so he called the captain. Even though he was tired, he felt that he needed to go and reassure his crew

members.

The captain told me that in all his years at sea, this was the worst storm he had ever been in. He told me that there was really nothing he could do, and they just had to press ahead and try to ride out the storm.

As the storm got worse, all the ship's crew came to the bridge, looking to the captain for guidance. He said to the crew that they ought to say a prayer together, which the captain would lead. The storm did not get better, but the prayer created a sense of peace among the crew.

After an hour or so the weather did begin to ease a little, and one by one, the crew began to go back to their cabins to try and get some rest. The captain stayed on the bridge until the officer on watch told him he could manage.

The captain and I just sat there for a time after he told me this story and then he looked up and said:

"You asked me a question whether

I believed in God? Yes, I suppose I do believe in Him."

In each and every one of our lives we all face challenging and difficult situations. You do not have to be in the middle of a storm at sea; there are many storms of life that can be equally difficult to deal with.

In Mark's Gospel, we read about Jesus calming a storm.

The crew on his boat, his disciples, were terrified, but Jesus was so peaceful that he was asleep.

When the disciples woke Jesus up in fear for their lives, we read that Jesus simply rose and instructed the wind and waves to be still, and the storm calmed down straightaway.

Afterwards, Jesus turned to his disciples and questioned them about their fear and their faith.

When storms, in life on shore or at sea, affect us we need to remember that we have a loving heavenly Father who takes care of us and loves us.