

Tuesday Reflection 16 March 2021

Seafaring

Francesca and I follow the Daily Reflections of the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM), and last Thursday Fr Laurence Freeman was writing about the ego, likening it to a boat; life is often portrayed as a journey or voyage, and Fr Laurence was making the point that, although we need a boat for some of the journey, the ego gradually becomes less and less important, until we reach the stage where we can dispense with it entirely.

This set me thinking about seafaring. Although a boat is sufficient unto itself, it benefits from sailing in company with others. In WW2, the chances of a merchant ship surviving a voyage were more than doubled if it sailed in a convoy with others protected by warships. This is perhaps a lovely metaphor for the Christian life in the Church; we are far better off in a community than alone, and the protecting warships could be seen as metaphors for the Sacraments.

A further advantage of a convoy is that if one ship is wrecked, there are others on hand to save the crew, just as in a Christian community ideally brothers and sisters in distress can be picked up and carried by others, hopefully until they reach a point where they can continue their journey under their own steam.

Michael Townson