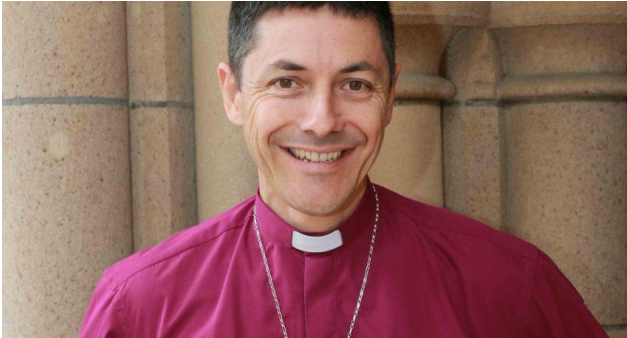


I get locked down, but I get up again



With all of the bad news that tends to dominate our feeds, the Tokyo Olympics seem a distant memory. For a couple of weeks, however, they brought plenty of moments of joy to so many people in lockdown or experiencing restrictions because of COVID-19.

There were a number of moments that stay in my mind from the Games.

The first was Australian [Nicholas Hough's semi-final](#) in the 110 metre hurdles. Hough got away from the starting blocks quite well, only to clip the first hurdle and subsequently knock over all nine obstacles that followed. I agree with one person who commented:

"Can I say, as someone who knocked over every single damn hurdle in Year 7 PE and was relentlessly bullied the rest of my high school life, Nicholas Hough is my new sporting hero."

Hough is an unlikely hero whose determination to make it to the end of the race despite everything has become an inspiration to many.

There was another story that also caught my attention. On 2 August, 28-year-old former refugee [Sifan Hassan of the Netherlands](#) fell in the qualifying heat of her 1,500 metre race. However she scrambled back to her feet and ran on. One media outlet reported it like this:

"She was undeterred; she got back up and, now suddenly in last place, went on to pass 11 runners to finish first."

She would go on to win the bronze in the 1,500 and gold medals in two additional races – the 5,000 and 10,000 metres. A reporter asked her what her strategy was for the races following the fall, Hassan replied:

"After what happened this morning, all the drama, I don't care," she said. "Step by step, I'll do my best."

She fell. She got up. She won three medals.

The two stories give us two very different examples of determination and resilience. "Step by step, I'll do my best" speaks not just to the much hyped 'Olympic spirit' but to an inner strength that might benefit us all during these times.

Night after night as I watch the news. I feel a deep sense of dis-ease in the pit of my stomach. The unfolding sadness on my TV screen and my iPad and my computer feels overwhelming – COVID-19, the environment, Afghanistan... I am often left wondering what I can do to meaningfully respond.

“Step by step, I’ll do my best.”

Often my ‘best’ looks more like hurdle-clipping Nicholas Hough than medal-winning Sifan Hassan, but all I can do is take another step and then another. And, one beauty of being part of a community of faith is that there are always others alongside, ahead of and behind me cheering me on, encouraging me, offering me support and reminding me that ‘my best’ is enough.

Sunday Devotions • Monday 6 September 2021 • By Levina Fuller

Sunday Devotion: 12 September 2021, Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Are we listening?



“but those who listen to me will be secure and will live at ease, without dread of disaster.” ([Proverbs 1.33](#))

Main Readings: [Proverbs 1.20-33](#); [Psalm 19](#); [James 2.18-26](#); [Mark 8.27-38](#); ([Isaiah 50.4-9a](#); [Psalm 116.1-9](#))

Supplementary Readings: [Psalm 138](#); [Acts 16.6-15](#); [Esther 2.18-3.6](#); [Psalm 116](#); [Mark 9.2-13](#)

For some people, their everyday safety depends upon careful listening. Erik Weihenmayer suffers from a degenerative eye disease which caused him to lose his sight when he was 13, but this didn’t stop him from reaching the top of Mt Everest in May 2001. Climbing a mountain where 90 per cent of climbers never make it to the top and where hundreds have died trying, Erik succeeded because he listened to guidance from members of the climbing group.

Erik Weihenmayer’s story shows us what we can find and what we can achieve when we listen well. In today’s Proverbs reading, Solomon tells us to listen to Wisdom as she cries out to us, calling us to listen to her counsel. In doing so, we will find God’s safety, security and peace.

Listening to Christ is important for our Christian journey. The Gospels show us that Christ is wise and that he cares about wellbeing. What better way to listen to Christ than to read His Holy Word, The Bible?

Let us listen to Christ by diligently reading the Word of God.