

Thoughts From On Board

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By Janet Baillie



Recently we sailed along the south coast of England on a square-rigged sailing ship. Our first port of call was the Isle of Wight. We couldn't get into a port and had to anchor out at sea. My thoughts went to the old hymn "Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?"

Over the last 18 months people have been battered by many different kinds of storm. Illness, bereavement, anxiety, loneliness, redundancy; I'm sure you can add to the list. But I also remembered the words of the chorus, *"We have an anchor that keeps the soul steadfast and sure while the billows roll; fastened to the rock which cannot move, grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!"*

Each time we entered or left a port, a pilot got on to the ship either to sail it himself or to advise the captain about specific dangers or possible difficulties. I had to wonder how appreciative the captain was or whether he felt quite capable of sailing his own ship and found the pilot rather annoying. I have a feeling I might have thought, "I can do this myself; I don't need you to interfere!" I know that Jesus is like the pilot waiting in the wings to help me when things are difficult, but I don't turn to Him for help often enough; do you?

Our furthest port was in the Isles of Scilly. The first time we've been there. How peaceful they were and how beautiful. We visited the Abbey Gardens on Tresco, where we saw plants from all over the world, as well as red squirrels (another first).

As we sailed back to our ship a dolphin played in the waves nearby, I was reminded how wonderful God's creation was, and how lucky we are to live in rural Suffolk where we can easily spend time in the countryside to enjoy it.

(Photo by Russell Baillie)

