

## **Thought for the day – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022**

**By Revd Kit Gunasekera**

### **Getting into trouble**

As I continue to think about the effect of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the first disciples, we see in Acts 4, the first brush of persecution from the authorities. After spending a night in jail, in response to their interrogation, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, shares his faith in Jesus. They are astonished at Peter's and John's courage, and knowledge, even though they are 'unschooled'. They take note that they have been with Jesus. Later on, upon being released after being threatened, they join the other believers and pray, asking God to enable them to speak the message of Jesus with great boldness. They then focus on being united, of making sure there are no needy people among them.

There are people around the world who are persecuted for their faith. We are fortunate that in this country there is freedom to worship in public. However, if we try to live our lives according to Jesus teaching, in public, we will sometimes face resistance, abuse and mockery. Witness the opposition faced by Archbishop Welby when he criticised the government's plans to send asylum seekers to Rwanda. Or bishops when they speak up for those who are on the margins. Mind your own business, is often their message, and yet, they are often the very people who talk about freedom of speech! Opposition comes from tweets, press releases and newspaper columnists, name calling, marginalising and pouring scorn, rather than guns, whips and jails. However, if the church continues to speak up for Jesus and His values, I can see more organised and systemic opposition.

May we be inspired by our spiritual ancestors. In the power of the Holy Spirit, they spoke boldly about Jesus, they prayed for even more boldness and they made sure they lived according to the values of Jesus, by being all together, supporting each other and providing for those in need.