

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## Today's readings:

A whole new world. Is 11:1-10  
Christ, our hope. Rom 15:4-9  
A man with a message. Mt 3:1-12

## Next week:

John asks Jesus: are you the one?  
Is 35:1-6,10; James 5:7-10;  
Mt 11:2-11

## In a nutshell

In the movement from John the Baptist to Jesus as centre-stage figure, the era of Israel's prophets comes to a close and a new era of salvation begins. A response is urgent! Prepare your hearts for the gift of salvation! Align your life with the one who is Life! To bear witness to the reign of God we must be willing to change.



## Sharing our wealth

*From a parish in Port Pirie Diocese, Penny shares two local stories of generosity and goodwill which she witnessed last Christmas.*

## Shopping with a difference

A Year 12 student from our parish went to the local mall to do her Christmas shopping. In the mall there was a large bin where shoppers were invited to purchase a gift and leave it in the bin to be distributed to families in need. Seeing that the bin was empty, the girl decided to dramatically change things. She spent all her Christmas shopping money on gifts to place in the bin.

Furthermore, she talked her boyfriend into doing the same! That Christmas members of her family each received a simple chocolate bar with a note informing them that their would-be present had been redirected to a more needy cause.

## Simply generous

A family with serious financial struggles received a St Vincent de Paul Christmas hamper.

As well as containing various foodstuffs the hamper had some shopping vouchers to be redeemed at a sports store.

The family decided that if someone could be generous to them, so too could they be generous to a family in even greater need than their own.

They redeemed the vouchers and forwarded the goods for distribution among refugee families.

## A family Christmas gift

I work in an aged care lodge. Last Christmas I gathered up my grandchildren after school and with some help from their mothers we organised a concert for the elderly residents. We practised for two weeks. On my next weekend shift my whole family arrived at the appropriate time. We did the Nativity and of course the children were the actors. Some Australian Christmas songs were sung. We finished with all singing 'Silent Night' and the eldest grandchild read a prayer. We served afternoon tea. It was a great success. The residents enjoyed it immensely. 'What comes from the heart touches the heart.'

Source: *In Their Own Words* (Bishops' Committee for Family and for Life, 2000)



## Christmas memories

*A Philippino woman says:*

What is it about Christmas in the Philippines that makes it unique? Or is it a case of wanting that which I do not have? Years of living in Australia have been rewarding, but come Christmas time, I get an overwhelming sense of homesickness. I wish my daughter could experience the way we celebrate Christmas in the Philippines. Only through my stories can I re-live for her my childhood delights of the season. (Dina)

Source: Edwina Mananquil-Delfino, *Colours of Life* (Filcom, 1999)

## 'Christmas Specials'

- Share Christmas stories from your childhood and from your homeland.
- Hold a multicultural street party. Invite your neighbours to bring decorations and food which reflect the celebrations of their culture at this time of year.



**RealPeople** offers faith reflections from the saints and prophets of everyday life.

A publication of  
The Story Source, © 1992-2002.

[www.TeresaPirola.net](http://www.TeresaPirola.net)