

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Trumpets of joy and redemption. Isaiah 35:1-6,10  
Patience has its rewards. James 5:7-10  
Messenger or message? Matthew 11:2-11

## Next week:

The child will be called Emmanuel.  
Isaiah 7:10-14; Romans 1:1-7;  
Matthew 1:18-24.

## In a nutshell

Today's Gospel reminds us that the coming of the Messiah confounded everyone's expectations. God's answer to Israel's prayers was no military conqueror or worldly politician but a humble preacher with a message of peace. During Advent let us attune our hearts to the peace of Christ, the true spirit of Christmas.



## Everyday prophet

*Who are the 'prophets' in your everyday lives - the people with a knack of recognising and pointing to the extraordinary touch of grace in apparently ordinary and mundane events?*

Dean and I worked together on a number of building sites as builder's labourers. We worked hard during the day and often played hard at night. You get to know people fairly well in this type of environment, or at least you think you do.

I noticed that Dean would sometimes sit on his own during a break. I used to kid him about his 'solo' moments, joking that he was doing his 'deep breathing'.

I also noticed that Dean kept a small notebook with him all the time. I presumed it was for listing numbers of bricks and bags of concrete and thought no more of it.

One day Dean left his notebook on a ledge while he answered the phone in the site office. It was open. I glanced down to see, not numbers and headings but words written in

short lines. I couldn't believe it. It was poetry. My mate Deano - a poet! You could have knocked me over with a feather.

I don't know if it was because Dean was the first person I had met who actually wrote poetry (to me, poets had always been old men who had died long ago) or the fascinating way his words put ideas into my head, but as I read the lines on the page I felt filled with a sense of wonder:

*Today the sky cracked open  
I saw the universe  
God, you heard me.*

## Pray

As a 'different' kind of prayer, write your own three line poem.

## Perspective

My wife and I were planning to drive interstate for a meeting. Although I had agreed to the trip I was somewhat agitated at the thought of spending a total of eight hours in the car when there were so many things to be done back home. 'That's eight hours out of our lives,' I grumbled to my wife. 'No, that's eight hours in our lives,' she replied. She was right! And I was grateful for her positive perspective. Eight hours to be together is a gift to be cherished in our married life. (RP)

## Pray

*Loving God, you are the Creator of all that is good.*  
Stop in the midst of activity to reflect and thank God for the goodness around you and within you.



## church below the rooftops

## Pint-size prophet

My neighbour, four year old Adam, surprises me with his insights. I was babysitting him one evening, standing with him at the door to farewell his parents, Rhonda and Glenn, as they prepared to leave for a formal function.

'Daddy and Mummy are pretty,' said Adam. Rhonda blushed and Glenn beamed.

'What makes them pretty, Adam?' I asked.

'They're happy!'

As Rhonda and Glenn hugged their son good night, I found myself saying a silent prayer of thanksgiving for this family. To me, spontaneous moments like these are glimpses of heaven. (Belinda)

## Think...Talk... Act

How does God surprise you in unexpected events and people?

This week, start a 'grateful' list. Jot down all the blessings of your life. You may like to start a family grateful list. Attach it to the 'fridge door and invite everyone to add to it during the week.



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

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