

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



Today's readings:

Jesus is taken into heaven. Acts 1:1-11
Christ reigns. Eph 1:17-23
Make disciples of all nations. Mt 28:16-20

Next week:

Pentecost Sunday
Acts 2:1-11; 1 Cor 12:3-7,12-13;
Jn 20:19-23

In a nutshell

Jesus gives the disciples authority and sends them forth on a mission to 'make disciples of all the nations...' As an extension of the resurrection, the ascension of Jesus is filled with the promise of his continuing presence to the Church. Empowered by the gift of the Holy Spirit Christians are to continue the mission of Jesus on earth today.



World-changing love

How can tending to your child's needs impact on global events? What's a routine day at the office got to do with changing the world? And what about saying a prayer on a day when you feel anything but spiritual—what good does that do?

Many people think that to make a difference in the world one must be involved (and be seen to be involved) in large scale, important-sounding public activities. And yet one of the most celebrated saints of our times, who continues to affect the lives of people all over the world, is a young French woman who joined an enclosed order of nuns at age 15, who did nothing of note by worldly standards, before dying of tuberculosis at age 24.

What St Therese of Lisieux did do, was dedicate all the ordinary tasks of daily life to God. In a spirit of prayer and penance, she did 'little things' for God. She did them with great love. In fact, for Therese, love was everything.

St Therese longed to be a missionary, an impossible wish

given her poor health. Even so, the power of her missionary heart is recognised today in the paradox that, while Therese never left her home, her constant zeal and prayer for people to know God led to her being named by the Church as co-patron of the missions with St Francis Xavier.

St Therese was no stranger to suffering. While physically ravaged by TB she also underwent a gruelling 'dark night of the soul' in which she found herself bereft of any spiritual consolation. Put simply: she lost her belief in heaven and felt something of the urge to suicide. And yet even this painful experience she offered to God as her gift of love.

Beyond my comfort zone!

In one parish:

I was challenged to reach out beyond my circle of church-goers and invite a new face to my prayer group.

I immediately thought of my neighbour, a young single mum who didn't at all appear the 'church type' (whatever that is!). So I summoned the courage to invite her to my prayer group.

I expected a polite 'no thanks', a look of amusement or a hint of suspicion. Anything but her actual reply: 'Oh, sure, I've always been interested in getting more involved in a church. I'd really like Julie (her infant daughter) to have some religion in her life. What time do you meet?' (Anne)



church below the rooftops

Have courage

A New Zealand priest was returning to his mission in Asia. But first he visited Rome where he met Pope John Paul II. The Pope moved around the semi-circle of visitors, speaking to each one personally. On reaching the New Zealand priest he asked where his mission was taking him. 'To Pakistan,' came the reply. To this, the Pope gripped the priest's upper arm and said simply but with feeling: 'Coraggio! Coraggio!'

'Make disciples...'

Five tips:

1. Believe in your baptism and confirmation. You have been empowered by the Holy Spirit: utilize this awesome gift!
2. Teach your children about Jesus. Share your faith.
3. Live what your preach.
4. Invite a non-believer to a faith celebration in your home or parish.
5. Support the work of missionaries in poor and dangerous parts of the world.



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

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