

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Samaritans receive the Spirit. Acts 8:5-8,14-17  
In the Spirit he was raised to life. 1 Peter 3:15-18  
I will send the Spirit of truth. John 14:15-21

## Next week:

The Ascension.  
Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:17-23;  
Matthew 28:16-20

## In a nutshell

The Spirit alive and active in Jesus is the same Spirit who inspires the life and mission of Christians. The gift of the Holy Spirit comes to us through the communion of love between the Father and the Son. Drawn into this loving relationship, we are empowered to live faith-filled and outreaching lives.



## Tried and tested

*If you love me, you will keep my commandments...*

My brother Damien joined the army. For a long time he was content and made great friends. But then he was transferred to another platoon where he was most unhappy. To use Damien's words, "They were a bad bunch." It wasn't just that they were loud and hard-drinkers (I have to admit: Damien could hold his own in that department). What depressed Damien was their total lack of any sense of morality and, with that, their total lack of hope.

Damien wrote to me many a letter saying he was all the more aware of his faith in this difficult environment. Whereas before he had taken his faith for granted, now he clung to it as an anchor to the world to which he knew he belonged and wanted to belong. During many a month of being depressed by the atmosphere of the platoon, Damien said he would remember our family gatherings, the Sunday Masses we shared and

the love and faith that bonded us. Our faith as a family reminded him of what was important and highlighted the joy and happiness that was missing in the platoon.

The drought was broken some months later when Damien was transferred again, this time to a much happier environment. Having survived the desert, he emerged with a new appreciation of who he was as a person of faith and the values he held dear.

*This week: Pray for greater openness to the Spirit of truth.*

## Conversation stopper

'My parents hate me,' said the delinquent teenager to the welfare officer.

'How do you know they hate you?'  
'I know they hate me because they let me do whatever I want.'

## Think...Talk

- How can we deepen our understanding of Christ's commandments?
- Name the supports which help you to keep the commandments of Christ. e.g. love relationships, positive memories, prayer, willpower...
- Where are my choices taking me?
- How informed and prayerful is my decision-making?
- How determinedly do I seek the 'truth'?
- Do I believe the Holy Spirit can guide me in my life? Do I want to be guided?



church below the rooftops

## Our choices affect each other

I felt really let down when Kelly began living with her boyfriend. Friends since high school, she and I had always said we would be faithful to our shared conviction: that sex was a gift to be experienced within marriage. But I guess social pressures had proved too strong. I felt very alone in my beliefs after that. But then an encouraging thought occurred: If my friend's decision could discourage me in my convictions about marriage, then my own decision (not to sleep with my boyfriend) must be strengthening somebody else's. (Jean, 24)



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

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