

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Peter speaks as an eye-witness. Acts 10:34,37-43  
Focus on Christ. Colossians 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6-8  
Jesus, risen from the dead! John 20:1-9 or Mt 28:1-10

## Next week:

Receive the peace of Christ.  
Acts 2:42-47; 1 Pt 1:3-9;  
Jn 20:19-31

## In a nutshell

For the Christian, no suffering, no disappointment, no death can outweigh the joy of Christ's resurrection. A huge statement... and not to be taken lightly. Can we let God into our deepest pain and loss to experience this truth for ourselves? Easter beckons us to take a new step in faith...



## The Lunch

It was now six years since Helen broke off the engagement. Six years since she'd found out, one month before her intended marriage, that her fiancé had been having an affair with her best friend for over a year. Six years later, almost to the day, we were sitting in a restaurant looking back over that traumatic time. As a friend of Helen's family living in another town, I had heard of her suffering but had never spoken about it with Helen. Until now.

I must confess to dreading this lunch. The night before I had visions of an anorexic survivor clutching a voodoo doll. But reality was even more incredible. There before me, sat a healthy, happy woman enjoying a superb pasta. I was astonished at Helen's obvious contentment as she talked about her life. From walking around in a devastated 'zombie-like' state for two years, gradually her enthusiasm for life had returned and she had emerged a stronger person than ever. 'In a way, I'm glad it happened,' was her response now.

'I understand so much more about myself, about life...and I talk to God a lot more, too.' After the shock, the anger and the just-getting-through-the-day, the healing slowly came.

For Helen it was a gradual realization and appreciation of her own God-given self-worth that pulled her through. As for her ex-fiance and ex-best friend, she wished them well and harboured no envy for their relationship. 'I'm looking for a relationship built on trust,' she said with determination. It was inspiring to listen to her. In fact, I learnt a lot from that lunch and felt both happy and moved by her journey. Out of the worst scenario Helen had emerged victorious as a loving human being. I wouldn't wish such trauma on anyone. But yes, in some sense, I was glad it happened too. (Claire)

## New life!

As a priest, a memorable baptism I celebrated was held in hospital for a tiny premature baby who wasn't expected to live. The ceremony was physically awkward as the baby was in a humid crib hooked up to all sorts of machinery. My hands and arms were in rubber gloves as I squeezed a drop of water from a saturated ball of cotton wool. It was a distressing period for the parents, and I recall how joyful was the celebration some weeks later when the baby—who surprised everyone by surviving—came home and was welcomed by family and friends. At that joy-filled reception I recall being awestruck that, so premature was this baby that, in theory, even then she should still be in her mother's womb! (Vincent)



## Think...Talk

Today, share with each other your favourite 'new life' stories!

e.g. Is your story about:

- a birth?
- a healing?
- a new lease of life?
- a joyful celebration?
- a ray of hope in a dark situation?

## Pray...Act

Pray for those being baptised or received into your faith community this Easter. Pray for peace in troubled parts of the world. Congratulate a newly baptised person ('neophyte') in your parish.

## Where does God live?

Patrick ('P.J.'), aged five, lives in Sheffield, England. Returning from Mass at Easter time, he asked his grandmother, 'Nan-Nan, which prison does the Lord live in?' 'Why, PJ, the Lord lives in heaven,' said his surprised grandmother. 'Then why do we sing "Hail the prison Lord?"' asked PJ.



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

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