

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## Today's Readings:

Entrance: Hosanna! Mt 21:1-11  
Resilient in the face of insult. Is 50:4-7  
He emptied himself unto death. Phil 2:6-11  
The Passion. Mt 26:14-27:66

## Next Week:

Easter Sunday. He is risen!  
Acts 10:34,37-43; Col 3:1-4;  
Jn 20:1-9

## In a nutshell

The scandal of the cross. After being hailed as a king, Jesus then suffers betrayal and the humiliation of being executed as a criminal. Is this the story of a holy man? Can Jesus really be the Son of God? The faith of generations of Christians answers with a resounding 'Yes!' This is Jesus the Christ, God's love incarnate. He lays down his life so that we might live.



At the foot of the Cross

## At Ground Zero

From an Australian family visiting New York shortly after the September 11th attacks.

On our second day in New York we decided to go downtown to catch a ferry to the Statue of Liberty. But all ferries were cancelled and that part of the city looked like a war zone - army tents, uniformed people galore and restricted movement. We didn't mean to, but as we made our way back uptown the crowd pulled us along and before we knew it we were at Ground Zero. I've never seen anything like it and never want to again. The deep sadness was palpable. Silence and smoke and hollow-eyed workers. And a smell. (TC)

## At a refugee centre

He had not long arrived in Australia on false documents when someone brought him to our Centre. As I interviewed him I wondered if he had been tortured. 'No,' he told me through an interpreter. 'Some asylum seekers find it

difficult to sleep,' I ventured.

He nodded. He showed me massively swollen feet and told me he could not sleep. 'Why are they swollen?' I asked. 'My hands were tied, I was in water up to my chin for three days... I was beaten around the head. My feet have been swollen since that.'

'You could not fall asleep for all that time or you would drown... We called that torture,' I said.

'In my country, it is common,' he replied.

Source: 'Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Australia', CLRI (NSW) Focus Paper #2, 2001.

## The cross of nails

Mary & I visited Coventry Cathedral. Later, as we browsed through the shop, Mary picked up a little pewter cross of nails on a chain. The story behind the cross relates to the original Cathedral being destroyed in a bombing attack during World War II. The morning after the attack a local priest, whilst picking through the rubble, found some of the huge medieval nails and fashioned them into a cross, hence the cross of nails. Out of the ashes came a Fellowship of the Cross of Nails. The fellowship has undertaken many projects aimed to bring about reconciliation between racial and cultural groups and raising concern about human treatment of the environment. The cross never leaves my neck. A reminder that for reconciliation Jesus came and that anyone who wants to follow him must seek to do the same. (Noel)



## Practical ways to stand at the foot of the Cross

- Spend time with a friend who has recently lost his/her spouse.
- Pray before a crucifix for the needs of the world.
- Pray your way through the evening news, rather than just 'watch TV'.
- Write a letter to someone who is walking the way of the cross.
- Ponder the injustice of poverty. Give generously to someone in need.
- Ask a person who seems sad: 'Is there something troubling you?' Then listen if he/she wishes to talk.

## Prayer in action

Wear a cross around your neck and finger it during the day whenever you feel sad or helpless. Let it be a sign of your conviction that Jesus heals and saves.



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

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

www.TeresaPirola.net