

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

Repentance leads to life. Ezek 18:25-28
Align your minds with Christ. Phil 2:1-11
The man who hesitated, then responded.
Mt 21:28-32

Next week:

The rejected stone became the keystone. Is 5:1-7; Phil 4:6-9;
Mt 21:33-43

In a nutshell

Today's Gospel speaks of the dynamics of conversion. God's love is forever patient, enduring our rebelliousness and offering us chance after chance to respond. The parable of the two sons, while offering hope and encouragement, also challenges spiritual complacency.



Crossroads

The religious sister who tells this story exudes joyful faith as she speaks of the deep fulfilment she has found in her vocation. Here she shares one of the rocky patches along the way.

There was a time when life hit rock bottom. It was partly to do with some difficult relationships within the community. I found myself deeply unhappy, imprisoned by my living environment and unsure of my religious commitment. I remember going home to Mum one day and saying, 'I just can't do this any more.' I was desperate. Mum was great. She put her arm around me and we talked. At one point she told me that she and my father had been through some very rocky patches. But they had seen it through and she was glad for it. Their love had been costly, but it was worth the price. I drew strength from her love and example, but my problems remained.

Things came to a head. My Superior sent me on an extended

retreat to work things out. There, for many weeks, I was surrounded by the peace of the bush and graced by the wisdom of my spiritual director. It was a dark night of the soul as I struggled with my whole vocational commitment. I felt resentful, angry at Jesus, as if I had been trapped into my vocation, as if I had been seduced by the Lord's call and now the prison bars had snapped behind me.

Then, the turning point. I was praying at my 'special spot' in the bush, accusing the Lord of his harsh ways. In the depths of my heart I sensed his voice. It was unmistakable - loving, gentle, without reproach. He said simply: 'If you want to, you can go. I am freeing you from your commitment. You can go in peace.'

It was out of that experience of love and freedom that I chose to stay.

Reflect on some of the ups and down of your faith journey.

Choices that cost

In a discussion about going to Mass, a young mother made this comment: The process of getting to Mass with young children can be such an ordeal. Just as I'm about to walk out the door, one of them vomits or falls over and starts screaming. And once I'm in the Church I'm up and down with the baby, or trying to keep the other kids quiet. I'm lucky to belong to a family-friendly parish which tries to make Mass 'easier' for parents with little ones and appreciates the effort it takes for them to get there. (C.L.)



church below the rooftops

Choices

A young man says...

I love my girlfriend. I love the way I feel around her and how much fun she is. I know the trust we share and how much she means to me. So why did I cheat on her when I went away on a uni skiing holiday? I honestly don't know. Later, I felt terrible. It was so hard to live with myself. When I got home I told her what I had done and how much I regretted my actions. I am incredibly lucky to have her forgiveness, and to still have her as my girlfriend.

I guess what I am trying to say is that sometimes telling the truth is the hardest thing to do, and a great risk. But it is better than telling a constant lie. I feel that through this experience our relationship has grown stronger.

Think . Talk

Share a time when you were sure you were going to choose one thing, but you chose another instead. Where was God in that experience? How do you feel about your choice(s) now?



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

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