

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Israel: light to the nations. Is 49:3,5-6  
A peace-filled greeting from St Paul. 1 Cor 1:1-3  
John the Baptist recognises Jesus, Lamb of God. Jn 1:29-34

## Next week:

The call of the first disciples.  
Is 8:23-9:3; 1 Cor 1:10-13,17;  
Mt 4:12-23

## In a nutshell

In today's Gospel John the Baptist recognises Jesus and witnesses to his true identity. Depicted here is both the message and the messenger. Jesus is the message - the Lamb of God, the chosen one of God. John the Baptist is the messenger, the one who recognises the Messiah and leads others to him.



## Letters of life

*Like John the Baptist, how can we be witnesses to Jesus Christ in daily life?*

For some years I was Principal of a Catholic primary school. Every two weeks I prepared a letter to be sent home to parents via their children. These were printed on blue paper so as to distinguish them from correspondence from other sources. It was customary for me to include in these regular letters at least one sentence by which I attempted to relate the experience of our lives to our faith journey. Somehow my correspondence felt incomplete unless it carried a message of greater significance than just the dates and times and other arrangements of school activities.

On many an occasion I would ask the Spirit to suggest a topic or comment; one that would reinforce for me and others the reality of the Incarnation in our shared lives, the fact that Jesus is Emmanuel, God-with-us.

Upon the announcement of my resignation after seven years,

there were many expressions of appreciation of my efforts. To receive such genuine affirmation was a great gift and to this day I am grateful to God and the people for that gift. But what amazed me more than anything else was the repeated lamentation, 'No more blue letters!'

Now of course every school requires the equivalent of a 'blue letter' in order to function. It was pointed out to me that the felt loss was not for the communication of school information, but for the faith message that people had learnt to associate with the blue letters.

It reaffirmed for me the importance of offering one another a word of faith, a 'spiritual nudge' amidst the busyness of life. (MC)

*Name a 'John the Baptist' in your life - someone who points the way to Jesus Christ.*

## Witness

I was reading the story of Irene McCormack to my Year Six class. (Irene, an Australian missionary sister, was assassinated in Peru in 1991). At the end of it, Ben put his hand up. 'Is it a true story, Mr Stevens?' he asked. 'I mean, did she really go out to tell people about Jesus and get killed?' No one spoke. Every child sat motionless. I looked at Ben and nodded. 'Then she was real.' In that rare moment of silence I could see him sorting through the veil of fact and fiction. (DS)

## Think...Talk

Describe a moment of recognition when you saw or felt the presence of God with great clarity.



## Awakening

*'I was never taught to pray by my parents - not even one day in my life,' says Karen as she remembers the people who first introduced her to God.*

When I was about five years old I was staying with my Aunty Elsie and Uncle Sam. They were not overly enthusiastic about taking me to their church but upon arrival I was welcomed by smiling people who seemed to take an interest in me. I remember feeling validated and special.

Once inside the church I didn't know what to do and so I followed everyone else like a lamb. At one point we were all on our knees and I wondered why. As I scanned the faces I found no one returning my gaze. All were shut-eyed and focused. So I too closed my eyes and then, for the first time, I felt their God. Only this time their God was for me too! In that silence I tangibly felt His great love. Then a peace came over me. I felt I was home, yet not a word was uttered! (Karen)



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

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