

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

The prophet speaks of a faithful people. Zeph 2:3; 3:12-13  
God's choice reverses human standards. 1 Cor 1:26-31  
Jesus proclaims the secret of inner beauty. Mt 5:1-12

## Next week:

Light of the world, salt of the earth. Is 58:7-10;  
1 Cor 2:1-5; Mt 5:13-16

## In a nutshell

*Happy are the poor in spirit...*

Drawing from the depths of his Jewish tradition, Jesus teaches the people in a radical way. The beatitudes call us to value human virtue over material possessions, inner goodness over external show. The beatitudes can sound 'sweet and endearing' until we internalise their true power.



## Home at last

*The Corpus Christi community in Melbourne was founded by Mother Teresa of Calcutta and is the home of eighty men, formerly homeless and living with alcoholism and often mental health problems. These comments are generously shared by a resident of Corpus Christi.*

They threw me out at 14; they didn't want me any more. My father accused me of taking his place and put me out of the house. I think he resented not being able to meet his responsibilities. I moved from job to job. I slept out under harsh conditions when I was out of work. Life became more difficult when I began to have a craving for alcohol.

I fell in love at 20 but I was never able to tell her how I felt. She married, but even now I sometimes dream of her. I suppose I'm a 'one woman man' because I've never married.

All my life I've wanted to be accepted, and with each new job I was determined to make good so that I could go back to my family and show them how successful I

was. But the booze beat me. I've never gone back and only heard much later that one of my brothers had died. It's been so long that my brothers and sisters have stopped thinking of me as a brother.

When I was in hospital someone suggested I try Corpus Christi. I was very nervous about going into new surroundings, but after 14 years, here is the home I've always wanted. I'm at peace here. I've made good friends and pull my weight by helping around the place. I still crave alcohol a bit but I can satisfy that within the ground rules here. Without Corpus Christi I'd be lost, because the loneliness and hardship of life 'outside' would mean that I'd start drinking again, and that would kill me. (John)

*Source: Focus paper No.27, Uniya Jesuit Social Justice Centre (1999).*

*Blessed are the poor in spirit...*

What 'faces of poverty' are esteemed by this beatitude?

## Boots 'n all

Kids' feet grow so fast. We had an old pair of football boots which we gave to the St Vincent de Paul shop. The boots wore a name tag and a few months later we received a note from a young boy in the next town. In part the letter read: 'Thank you for the boots, they are great. This year will be the first time I have played in a team. You know you can't train with a team if you don't have a pair of boots.'

I never thought I would have an experience of belonging through an old pair of footy boots. (Keith)



church below the rooftops

## Blessed are the peacemakers

One night my husband Andrew and I had a big argument. Our little girl Maraeka, who is 20 months old, was there. She cried and we felt awful.

The next morning I had planned to say sorry to Andrew and to give him a kiss and hug in front of Maraeka. We were lying in bed and Maraeka climbed up and lay between us. As I proceeded with my apology Maraeka drew on her tiny vocabulary to say, 'Happy, Happy!' Then she took my head in her little hands and gave me kisses on my forehead. Blessed are the peacemakers. (Siobhan)

## Think...Talk

- Bring alive one of the beatitudes by telling the story of a person who lives it well.
- For you, which is the most challenging beatitude to put into practice?



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

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