

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Rejoice, daughter of Zion! Zech 9:9-10;  
Live by the Spirit. Rom 8:9,11-13;  
The simplicity of the mystery. Mt 11:25-30.

## Next week:

A sower went out to sow some seeds... Is 55:10-11; Rom 8:18-23; Mt 13:1-23.

## In a nutshell

Today's Gospel tells us that the wisdom of Jesus' message is attained not by a high IQ or a PhD, but by the revelation of the Father. It is our child-like openness and simplicity that will bring us into relationship with God; a relationship which releases us to live in the freedom of the Spirit.



## A train ride with a difference

It was the usual ride home on the train after work. Rows of us sat in silence as poles, buildings and bridges flashed past. It wasn't until Peter entered the carriage that I realised how glum and sombre the atmosphere had been.

Peter appeared to be a young man with Down Syndrome. He was impeccably dressed in a suit and carried a thin briefcase. He walked from one end of the carriage to the other, and returned to the front. He stood to attention and nodded to everyone on board. Then, one by one, he began to introduce himself to every person in the carriage. He asked each person their name and said, 'My name is Peter.'

At first I was startled by this unusual incident. Bit by bit, our carriage was being transformed. People who had been moulded into their individual cocoon were now introducing not themselves not only to Peter, but to passengers beside them, in front or behind them. There were chuckles and

exclamations as men and women, old and young, found themselves partners on a train-ride-with-a-difference.

When all introductions had been done, Peter came to sit next to me and my friend, Lisa. He looked at me for a moment and said, 'You are a nice person.' I found myself blushing and speechless. 'You're pretty nice yourself, Peter,' my friend returned. 'Thank you,' replied Peter with a natural sense of confidence and gratitude.

At that point he went to investigate another part of the carriage. I watched him and envied his freedom to be himself. So often I live in fear of what others will think or say about me. Peter's joy in being himself revealed my own disability. (LO)

*Describe someone who exudes joy and simplicity.*

## Who says church is boring?!

Our two year old daughter, Maraeka, just loves going to Church. She dances to the music, draws pictures at kid's liturgy and looks forward to the company of her cousins.

One Sunday, arriving late, we drove around to the back of the church. Maraeka, thinking we had changed our minds about going to church, started up a tantrum, screaming 'Church! Church!' Andrew, my husband, turned around and addressed her firmly: 'Maraeka, if you continue to scream, we are *not* going to Church!'

Well, that's one thing we thought we'd never say as parents! (SPM)



## Simply smile!

Last Lent I asked God what he wanted me to do as a Lenten penance. I was expecting something complex and difficult, but this is the answer I received: Smile! I was rather surprised. Maybe I'm not smiling as much as I should.

I look back on my life and realise that all the friendships I have made began with a smile. My wife often reminds me that our love began with a smile. I also realised that the people I enjoy being with are the ones who smile at me. A friend once told me it takes fourteen muscles to make your frown, while a smile completely relaxes the face. It seems that there are many good reasons for smiling.

I don't know what Jesus will say to me when I meet him face to face, but I am almost sure He greets everyone who goes to heaven with a warm embracing smile. So if you see me smiling at you, you will know I'm practising for my meeting with Jesus. And please... SMILE BACK! (Paz)



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

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