

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Repentance replaces sin. Ws 12:13,16-19;  
The Spirit comes to help us. Rom 8:26-27;  
At harvest time... Mt 13:24-43.

## Next week:

Eureka! Treasure in a field.  
1 Kg 3:5,7-12; Rom 8:28-30;  
Mt 13:44-52.

## In a nutshell

Conversion, repentance and renewal take time. Today's Gospel, which draws on the symbol of the harvest to refer to the Day of Judgement, suggests that we should give people every chance to hear and respond to the Word of God, leaving all judgement to God.



## Mountains and valleys

I'd like to tell you about my friend Luke. For whatever reason Luke got into a lot of trouble as a teenager - drinking, smoking marijuana, vandalism, picking fights. Even when he was expelled from school, Luke would say, 'Yeah, it was stupid and wrong, but gee we had fun.' It took two very serious incidents to make him think again.

The first was when Luke's bong-smoking buddy hung himself. The second was at the boy's funeral where Luke met up with a girl from school. She told him that Jenny, a girl whom Luke used to harrass and tease for being fat, had developed bulimia and had twice attempted suicide.

Luke's world came crashing down. For the first time he faced the hard facts: not only was his life going nowhere, he had managed to stuff up the lives of others too.

In the back of his mind, Luke made a connection between the kind of life he wanted and a couple of friends of his who were Christians. He began to spend more time with them, not that he wanted to become a Christian.

One day he was abseiling with these mates. Luke went down the rope first. He got to the bottom, turned around on the ledge and saw the canyon open up to a spectacular valley. At that moment something bubbled up inside him. It was a realisation that, if God was so powerful to make all this, then perhaps God was mighty enough to change his life. Luke felt intensely empty, as if his insides had fallen out. He saw with clarity the guilt, the anger, the hate that had been inside him, but which he could never name. And he said to God, 'I give my life to you. Change my life.' Then flowing into that empty space, he felt an indescribable warmth and power and love. Luke had begun a powerful journey of conversion.

(Continued below)

## Mountains and valleys

(continued)

Now Luke had a lot of work to do. In the next few months he gave up marijuana. He apologised to his parents. He went to Jenny and asked forgiveness. As he stopped using dope, Luke's memory and speech improved. Most importantly, he learnt to love himself and others. Today Luke is a committed Christian, active in his church, studying at TAFE and has a great girlfriend.

I remember that when I came down the rope to join Luke at the bottom of that abseil, he said, 'Joe, you'll never believe what just happened.' But I did believe him, because I believe God powerfully changes lives, because he's powerfully changed my life. And he can do the same for all of us. (Joe)



church below the rooftops

## Think...Talk

What is your reaction to Luke's story?

Do you have a similar story to tell from the events and people in your own life? Share this story with a friend.

Do you believe God is all-powerful? Why or why not?

## Pray...Act

If there is something you need changed in your life, ask God to transform this part of you.

Pray Luke's prayer: "God, I give my life to you. Change my life."

Perhaps you need to talk with someone about it. Approach a wise and faithfilled person who can direct you appropriately.



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

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