

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

The key to the House of David. Is 22:19-23;
It is in God that we exist. Rom 11:33-36;
I give you the keys of the kingdom. Mt 16:13-20.

Next week:

A strong rebuke from Jesus.
Jer 20:7-9; Rom 12:1-2;
Mt 16:21-27.

In a nutshell

'Who do you say I am?'

'You are the Christ.'

Today we hear a vital exchange between Jesus and Peter. Peter, inspired by the Spirit, proclaims Jesus to be the Christ. As a Church, we join Peter in this proclamation. Today, with boldness and passion, say it for yourself!



These are difficult times in the Church and our leaders often come under fire on all fronts. Today, let's put 'issues' aside, and simply pray with compassion and gratitude for those entrusted with the task of leadership.

The 'Peter' factor

I often think of my friend as a 'Peter'. He has the kind of natural leadership qualities which I imagine St Peter to have had. He is not a roving preacher like Paul. Nor is he a fiery prophet like John the Baptist. He is a man of gentle but firm order, with strong opinions and compassionate concern; at home in the structures of church life in which he lives and works, while working tirelessly to align them ever more closely with the gospel vision.

Perhaps one of this man's greatest qualities is his ability to stay clearly focussed on the 'essentials' of the gospel message: the call to pray, to love, to persevere in faith, even when things aren't perfect. These fundamentals don't get lost under a pile of paperwork

or 'churchspeak'. My friend is also a person of hope. While others walk around drooping with the weight of the world on their shoulders, he is always quick to smile, to speak positively of this person or that, to praise a good initiative or enthuse about the possibilities at hand.

I don't mean to idealise my friend. Sure, he's an imperfect human being like the rest of us, and we don't agree on every issue. But at the end of the day, I am prepared to trust and work with him because I know he is a faithful believer with a genuine love for Jesus Christ and for the people entrusted to his care. I know he is a man of prayerful integrity and that, whatever happens to our Church, he will be there till the end—praying, hoping, loving and leading to the best of his ability. Can one ask for anything more?

In your view, what is your bishop's best quality? Give thanks for this gift.

A father's love

'No one asked me if I wanted to be a parent!' Reg looked at me and then lowered his head sheepishly. 'That's a pretty silly thing to say, isn't it?'

Reg was expressing something of the pain felt by every parent experiencing difficulties with teenage children. I knew Reg was a wonderful father who loved his kids. He had been listening to them for years, walking alongside them, suffering with them as they made mistakes.

When I look at Reg I see the real leadership qualities it takes to be parent. (Noel)



The power in a name

There are several families with small children in our block of units. Some of them are new arrivals in our country and I always try to speak to them when I see them. With one family it has taken a long time for the children to respond. I wondered about this. Was it the language barrier? Were they especially shy? Had their parents instructed them not to speak with strangers? Recently there was a breakthrough! I found out the name of one little girl from a neighbour. The next time I saw her I said, 'Hello, Leslie!' Instantly she turned to those with her and said (in perfect English): 'She knows my name!' She turned back to me saying, 'This is my brother J.R. and my friend Ethel.' Calling her by name had broken down barriers. Now Leslie and I chat quite a lot. (JS)

Think...Talk

Think of a 'Peter' or a 'Peta' in your life; i.e. a person who exhibits qualities of Christian leadership. What does this person say or do that impresses you?



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

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