

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## Today's Readings:

Seek the Lord - now! Is 55:6-9  
A holy dilemma. Phil 1:20-24,27  
So, why can't you let me be generous? Mt 20:1-16

## Next Week:

A tale of two sons  
Ezek 18:25-28; Phil 2:1-11;  
Mt 21:28-32

## In a nutshell

In the parable of the vineyard owner, the workers who come late are paid the same wage as the early-starters. You can imagine what a current affairs program would do with a story like that. 'Unjust labour practices exposed!' The point of this parable is that God's ways are not our ways. Our generosity is measured. God's generosity knows no bounds.



## A decision to love

A woman told this story of personal conversion with deep feeling and sincerity.

She had once worked in an institution for homeless men. One man in particular took up much of her time in her office. Day after day, he talked on and on.

The tension within her grew daily and she began to dislike the man. The dislike intensified to the point that one day, unable to stand the office situation any longer, she rose from her chair and stormed out. Upstairs she sought refuge in an empty dormitory where she paced up and down, up and down, seething with anger, stewing over her intense dislike for the man. Suddenly, without warning or fanfare, a tiny voice within made itself heard in a very different key to her state of turmoil. So different, it startled her. She stopped and listened.

'What is there that is likeable about that man?'

She halted. Her self-pity began to dissolve. She even smiled and

took the first step on the road to conversion, to a change of heart and peace of mind.

She recognised that what was driving her angst was not the man's faults, but her allowing his faults to become the focus of her attention and energies.

There and then she made a crucial decision. Instead of becoming absorbed by his limitations, she would choose to focus her attention on all that was good about him, about her, and the situation at hand. She would choose the 'unreasonable' option. She would choose love.

## Boundless love

In a family life survey a couple described their family as consisting of one natural daughter, two adopted daughters and seventeen foster daughters (aged 5 months to 17 years). I smiled to think of the generous love that would characterize such a home. How unreasonable! How gospel. (TP)

On a day when I was most desperately in need of a break from the pressures of parenting, a woman in the parish offered to take my twins for the afternoon. This woman has eleven children of her own! (MG)



## church below the rooftops

## Think about it

Share a story about someone whose love and generosity seems to know no bounds.

## Think . Talk

A sticker spotted on the back of a car: 'Perform frivolous deeds of kindness and extravagant deeds of love.'

Describe a time when you were the giver or recipient of an 'illogical' gesture of love. What effect did this have on you, on others?

## Circle of love

Our two-year-old loves it when my husband and I embrace. She tries to climb her way into the middle of our passionate clinch. It's like a tangible sign of her desire to be totally surrounded by our love. (Sandra)

## Act

Surprise someone with an act of overwhelming generosity!



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

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