

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## Today's Readings:

A stern warning. Mal 1:14-2:2,8-10  
Like a mother we loved you. 1 Thes 2:7-9,13  
Practise what you preach. Mt 23:1-12

## Next Week:

Parable of the ten bridesmaids  
Ws 6:12-16; 1 Thes 4:13-18;  
Mt 25:1-13

## In a nutshell

Some Pharisees in today's Gospel are criticised because they are more concerned for their appearance in the eyes of the public than their standing before God. This Gospel calls us to face up to our own egotistical tendencies, to be humble and to discover our true identity as children of God, equal to one another in the eyes of our Maker.



## What really matters?

The national sales manager of an international firm had to travel throughout the Australian continent during the year. To get the top position he had proved himself to be a super-salesman. Calling on his firm's sales representatives and agents took up most of his time. His wife and children saw little of him. Then, sadly, one day his wife became seriously ill. Her husband quickly understood that it would be impossible for him to spend most of his time travelling away from home. He needed to be around to care for his wife and to be present to his children.

Without delay he resigned from his firm. He needed work that would not take him far afield. So he approached a man running a much smaller company trading in the same products he had been selling before.

He was taken on and now represents this smaller company in the city where he lives. Having forgotten none of his sales skills he is now rapidly expanding his

business and at the same time is able to return home to his wife and children each day after work. (PK)

## Think . Talk

This story reminds us that it is often situations of suffering and calamity that bring into focus our core Christian values and lead us to reorder our priorities accordingly. Have you had such an experience in your life?

In what way did your lifestyle change?

## Sacred space

I was chatting with a worldly-wise single woman, a committed Catholic. In the course of our conversation which covered the usual topics like 'job' and 'mortgage', I was quietly challenged to learn of a number of small, counter-cultural decisions she has incorporated into her lifestyle. She has chosen to own neither a car nor a mobile phone! It is her way of slowing herself down and fostering her contemplative side. A bus or train trip is an opportunity to sit and reflect, she says. Catching a lift with a friend is a chance to chat and build community. Not owning a mobile phone means she is assured 'space' in her day which so many of her friends lack because they are constantly 'on call'. [2002]



## church below the rooftops

## Think again

The visiting French Jesuit began his talk by saying that he lived in Taiwan where he taught Chinese to foreigners.

At the beginning of the year he always asks his class 'Why do you want to learn Chinese?'

Most times a quick, clear answer was forthcoming to what seemed to the students to be a silly question. 'To speak to the Chinese people!' 'Mais non,' came the reply. 'To listen to the Chinese people!'

## Reflection

Ask yourself: What really matters in life?

Are my stated priorities reflected in the practicalities of my life?

Is my faith in Christ central to my life:

- as stated?
- as lived in practice?



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

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