

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## Today's Readings

Watch for wisdom. Ws 6:12-16  
They will rise with Christ. 1 Thes 4:13-18  
Stay awake for the Lord. Mt 25:1-13

## Next Week:

Parable of the talents  
Prv 31:10-13,19-20,30-31;  
1 Thes 5:1-6; Mt 25:14-30

## In a nutshell

The wise bridesmaids in today's Gospel refer to members of the community who, unlike their foolish counterparts, welcomed God's gift of salvation. The lamp oil may be thought of as symbolising the maturity of one's relationship with God, a relationship which is cultivated over time and cannot be manufactured at the last minute.



## Sacraments alive!

*Let's not take for granted the beautiful sacramental rites which are part of our Church and which offer hope, healing and community.*

## A privileged moment

I was asked to present the Oil of Catechumens during the Chrism Mass this year. (This is one of the oils, blessed by the bishop, which will be used by parishes when they baptise, confirm and anoint their parishioners.)

As I held the oil aloft before the assembly, during the singing of the hymn, something happened. I became profoundly aware of the power of these oils. In a few days they would offer healing and then 'seal' the promised Spirit upon each of our people preparing for baptism in the Catholic Church.

What powerful rites we celebrate in our Christian communities! Who can possibly imagine the effects of this blessed oil? It was a privileged moment. (JS)

Source: Network News

## Anointed and ready

An elderly, frail Irish-born lady, a widow of rich faith and scanty means, was receiving the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick at home. Living with her was her only son who was also in poor health. He took the opportunity to be anointed with his mother.

Three days later the son died. While mourning her son's death, the mother reported joyfully that, in the interval between his anointing and his death, her son could not stop talking about what the sacrament had done for him. Spiritually, he had experienced healing grace. This greatly eased the pain of the mother in coping with the loss of her son. (PK)

## Ready for the Lord

*A parish priest reflects:*

When the children come forward to receive Jesus at their First Communion, in most of them you can see by their faces that they are truly focused on what they are doing and who it is they are receiving. It is beautiful to see. When engaged couples come to me saying that they want to be married, you can tell which are most ready to enter such a commitment. They are the ones whose focus extends beyond the wedding day. They want to talk not just about the wedding but about their relationship, their shared hopes and concerns, their children, their faith and the lifetime journey ahead.



church below the rooftops

## Remember

I know a priest who, before he baptises a child before assembled family, friends and godparents, asks them if they can name the child's birthday. Why? Not because being a godparent is about sending cards and presents annually, but because it's about remembering and accompanying the child on the journey. (TE)

## Think about it

Parish sacramental programs are one practical way to encourage our children to be ready to 'go out to meet Jesus.'

As a parish family of faith, there is a spiritual sense in which these children 'belong to us' and not only to their blood families. Take an interest in and pray for the children of your parish as they prepare to meet Jesus in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist and Reconciliation.



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

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