

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem! Is 60:1-6
A mystery revealed. Eph 3:2-3,5-6
The star went forward to where the child lay. Mt 2:1-12

Next week: Baptism at the Jordan. Is 55:1-11 or 42:1-4,6-7;
1 Jn 5:1-9 or Acts 10:34-38;
Mk 1:7-11

In a nutshell

No matter how bleak the world can seem at times, as Christians we live with this relentless hope: the radiance of God's love dispels the darkness of sadness and sin. Like the star leading the wise men to the Christ child, let us illuminate the way to Christ through the truth and goodness of our lives.



"It's hard to learn when I hurt inside"

Rainbows—a peer-support program for children grieving through divorce—had its beginnings in the personal story of one woman and her three sons.

While growing up in Chicago, Suzy Yehl's only dream was to be a good wife and mother. She had never considered divorce was going to be part of her life. When it did happen she was devastated. She hurt so much that she was relieved when friends told her not to worry about the kids. 'They're resilient, they'll bounce back,' they said.

But Suzy realised her sons were hurting as much as she. While she had found an adult support group for herself, she could find nothing for her children. So in 1983, Suzy gave up the security of her employment to do something she knew in her heart had to be done for children grieving the loss of a parent through death, divorce, separation or abandonment. She developed a peer-support program for children of single-parent and

step-parent families.

A nurse by profession, she had lots to learn about writing manuals, typesetting, silk-screening, setting up a non-profit organisation and marketing the program. But no job was too small and 'no' was not part of her vocabulary. Her determination paid off.

In 1983 three Catholic schools piloted *Rainbows*, the goal being to help grieving children understand their new family unit, build self-esteem and accept the changes in their family.

Through Suzy's tenacity, belief in her calling and the ability to encourage others to share in her dream, *Rainbows* came to be used in many countries.

Source: *Catholic Ethos* (No.12), National Catholic Education Commission. Used with permission.

Little lights in the darkness

The following comments come from those involved in Rainbows.

I like Rainbows because you do fun activities. Every day I feel safe because I went to Rainbows. It helped me to know that other kids were like me and it was okay. We shared things together. (10 year old girl)

I felt important. (10 year old boy)
(Before Rainbows) the only one who listened to me was my teddy bear. (6 year old girl)

You know... I've lost all my anger. (11 year old boy)

My daughter is smiling once again. (parent of 12 year old)



Think...Talk

In what way does God's love shine in your life?

- How has light pierced the darkness?
- In what ways is it still dark?

Action

- Plan one caring action this week as a ray of hope in someone's life.

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