

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

Peter says it straight. Acts 3:13-15,17-19
Christ takes away our sins. 1 John 2:1-5
The risen Jesus is present. Luke 24:35-48

Next week:

Jesus, the Good Shepherd
Acts 4:8-12; 1 John 3:1-2;
John 10:11-18

In a nutshell

Today's Gospel radiates with joy and relief. Prior to Jesus' resurrection so much of his message was hidden from the disciples' understanding. They were confused, frightened by events out of their control. Now, in the wake of the resurrection, all becomes clear. There is no need to fear or doubt, for God is victorious over sin and death.



Journey of faith

I was baptised in a Methodist Church in 1939. My first husband's funeral was conducted by a Uniting Church minister.

In 1985 I married Jim, a Catholic, and occasionally joined him at Mass. In 1994, while attending a Protestant funeral, the thought of Jim at my funeral came to mind. I seriously wondered how it would be for him to be saying his last goodbye to me in a church which was not his. Thus began the most amazing journey of faith: I joined the RCIA and started the process of becoming a Catholic.

At first all I wanted to know was WHY? Why do Catholics genuflect? Why do they cross themselves? Why, why, why...? Well, I was given good answers to all my 'Whys'. And I learned about the traditions of the Church, the sacraments and the rituals involved in the Mass. I was gently guided to an understanding of what becoming a follower of Christ really meant.

Each RCIA meeting began with a gathering prayer. Then participants

were encouraged to think about recent events in their own lives and in the world around them. A reading from the Gospel was followed by reflections which were always interesting and enlightening. Slowly I began to realise that Jesus is a real person, relevant to me in everyday life. I must admit that before I began the RCIA I had only ever perceived God as an elderly, bearded, Caucasian man dressed in long, flowing white robes who was somewhere 'up there' and to whom one prayed when one wanted something!

I am a Catholic now. And I know that Jesus the risen Lord is with me, personally, every minute of every day. The RCIA journey transformed my life! (Barbara)

Source: The full version of Barbara's testimony appeared in *Network News* #24 Jan/00.

Steps in understanding

During my visit to Lourdes I had the opportunity to spend time with a group of Irish children with disabilities. In their company I was awakened to the challenges faced by those who live with a disability, and the dedication of those who care for them. I soon realised that these children displayed the same characteristics as other children - they had their fun, they got into trouble; while their disabilities restricted them in certain ways, they were not stopped from living life to the full. These children were great to be with; they were teachers in their own right. In their own way they taught me a tolerance not always found among so-called 'normal' people. (KM)



Revelation

As catechist, I led my kindergarten class step by step through the Emmaus story. I told it like a detective story. 'Who could this mystery man be?' I wondered aloud at regular intervals. The children puzzled over the clues. A soldier? An apostle? A robber in disguise? No.

Then I gave them the final clue: *He broke the bread...* Instantly a little girl gasped with recognition. 'It has to be Jesus!' she whispered in awe. 'Why does it have to be Jesus?' I asked her. '*Because that's what he does,*' came the reply. In her eyes I saw a powerful revelation taking place. She had made the connection between the Jesus proclaimed in the scriptures and the eucharistic action she had witnessed on Sundays.

May our own powers of recognition resonate with the same vitality and faith. (JM)

Think . Talk

Describe a time when you recognised with clarity the presence of Jesus.



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

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