

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

Paul's early days as an apostle. Acts 9:26-31
Believe in God. Love each other. 1 John 3:18-24
Life in Christ bears fruit. John 15:1-8

Next week:

Love one another as I have loved you. Acts 10:25-26,34-35,44-48;
1 John 4:7-10; John 15:9-17

In a nutshell

The Church, Christ's body, is a living, growing community of faith. To fulfil the Church's vocation and mission we, its members, must be in contact with Jesus, the source of life. Cut off from Christ we are like withering leaves disconnected from the vine. Today, let us reaffirm our life in the Spirit and draw from the deepest source of life.



Sustaining truths

At Mass one Sunday we were invited to renew our baptismal promises. This consisted of, not the usual response 'I do', but an engaging prayer of baptismal faith which was provided on sheets. I didn't think I was in a prayerful frame of mind as I picked up the prayer sheet. I was tired, and a little depressed perhaps.

As I began to recite the first line of response, I was surprised to find my voice catching in my throat. I tried the next line, but tears stung my eyes. I recovered and rejoined the congregation's voice, but again I could not even make it to the end of the line without starting to cry. I was aware that my emotion was connected with the power of the beliefs I was attempting to verbalise. Here I was, in the middle of an ordinary, not-so-good Sunday, daring to profess my faith in an extraordinary truth, my belief in the risen Christ.

Christ! The one who has sustained me through all those dark nights. Christ! The one who will

never leave me and who will one day welcome me into his eternal kingdom.

The reality of these truths rested deeply in my heart as a kind of knowledge, a certainty. And it moved me with emotion. I don't think I managed to complete a single response, but it was one of the most powerful prayers I have ever prayed! (Anna)

Close to God, close to each other

It was a meeting of married couples and the topic was 'Praying as a couple'. Veronica spoke up:

"For David and I our prayer is like the barometer of our relationship. When we are not relating well as a couple, our attempts at prayer are pretty poor. If there is a point of tension between us, we find it very difficult to pray together. We need to feel secure and at ease with each other in order to connect in that way. Conversely, if our prayer together flows easily it's a sure sign that our relationship is strong. Even grace before meals highlights our closeness or distance at that moment. As a barometer for our unity, 'couple prayer' is a great help."

A challenge for couples: In your own way, try praying together.



After surgery

Having survived surgery and chemotherapy for cancer last year, including the removal of some lymph nodes, I am left with a sore arm - a constant dull ache that never really goes away. The experience has given me a new appreciation of life and faith. I am filled with admiration for those who have lived with illness all their lives, those for whom physical pain and health worries have always been part of daily life. They must be very courageous people who are in touch with a mystery greater than all of us. (Clare)

Think . Act

- Think of some of the people, things and everyday practices that keep you close to Christ and his Church.
- This week, establish (or restore) one healthy habit that will help to keep you close to Christ and his Church.



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

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