

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

God's wrath and mercy. 2 Chronicles 36:14-16,19-23
We are God's work of art. Ephesians 2:4-10
God loved the world so much. John 3:14-21

Next week:

Lessons from a grain of wheat
Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 5:7-9;
John 12:20-33

In a nutshell

John's Gospel speaks of the depths of God's love. This love is healing, transforming, liberating. It is a gift given, not a reward earned. It is offered through the sacrificial death and resurrection of God's Son. How greatly our world needs this love. How deeply humanity hungers for the truth of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world.



You've got mail

A rather unusual snippet from a personal faith journey:

I arrived home from work one ordinary day in 1992 when, for some weird reason, I had this feeling that God wanted me to go to my mail box. This was very odd. I am not in the habit of getting such 'God' messages. Also, I lived on the third floor of an apartment block and I didn't fancy descending three flights of steps to my mail box. I shrugged off the thought and went about my business. But it persisted throughout the evening, the same nagging feeling that God wanted me to go to my mail box. Eventually, in order to purge myself of the silly thought, I went down to my mail box. As I expected, there was nothing there but a bit of junk mail. As I climbed the staircase I glanced down at the leaflet in my hand: a carpet cleaning ad. Nothing special about it except for one thing. At the top was printed a scripture verse: *Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may*

not perish, but may have eternal life.

Now at this point in my story you might expect me to say that the earth moved and I gave my life to Jesus on the spot. In fact, nothing of the sort happened. Apart from my surprise at finding a scripture quote in my mail box, I found no solace or inspiration in being the recipient of this message. I didn't even get my carpets cleaned!

But something must have twigged; because I kept the leaflet. In fact, I still have it. And I would have to say that over the last eight years I have developed a subtle awareness of the significance of Jn 3:14-21. Whenever I hear it I always think of that never-to-be-repeated 'mail box' episode. In fact, I quite enjoy the idea that although God loves the whole world, God also cares about one little person: me. At least, God cares enough to tell me personally, by dropping a note in my mail box!

God's design

Travelling through Europe, I joined a tour to Subiaco and Monte Casino. There we saw many inspiring sculptures, carvings and mosaics. I was dazzled by the beauty of such works. As we travelled back to Rome that afternoon I was casually viewing the passing countryside when I found myself captivated by the view through the front window of the coach. I witnessed a kaleidoscope of colour mingled with cloud formations that outstripped every bit of finery we had seen during the course of the day. As I sat there, captivated by the spectacle in the sky above us I could only think, 'Yes, Lord, you are

the best. We have seen what human beings can do, but alongside you it is no contest.' (Ken)

Sacrificial love

From the Rwandan massacres at the end of last century, where countless people perished simply for belonging to the wrong tribe, there emerged many stories of courage and heroism. One lesser known story tells of a girls' school stormed by violent vigilantes. They demanded that the girls separate themselves into two groups according to tribal identity, the intention being to kill those who belonged to the 'offending' tribe. The girls refused to distinguish themselves. In retaliation the entire group was slaughtered along with the religious sister who was the girls' teacher.

Pray

Reflect on God's love for the world, the whole earthly planet, expressed through the sacrifice of Christ. In a simple prayer, pray for the whole world and for the human family.



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

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