

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

A virtuous man suffers. Wisdom 2:12,17-20
Wars start within ourselves. James 3:16-4:3
Welcome a child, welcome me. Mark 9:30-37

Next week:

Sin - it's just not worth it!
Numbers 11:25-29; James 5:1-6;
Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48

In a nutshell

The disciples in today's Gospel do not fully understand Jesus. Concern for their own needs and ambitions impedes their ability to grasp his message. Outwardly they are his followers, yet spiritually they have a long way to go. In a prophetic gesture, Jesus takes a child in his arms: true greatness is found in love, simplicity and humble service.



Rose

On the first day of university our lecturer challenged us to meet someone we didn't already know. I stood up to look around when a hand touched my shoulder. A wrinkled, little old lady was beaming up at me with a smile that lit up her entire being. She said, 'Hi handsome. My name is Rose. I'm 87 years old. Can I give you a hug?'

I laughed and allowed her to give me a giant squeeze. 'Why are you at uni at such a young age?' I asked. 'I'm here to meet a rich husband,' she joked.

'No, seriously.' I was curious.

'I always dreamed of having a tertiary education and now I'm getting one!' she told me. We became instant friends.

Over the year Rose became a campus icon as she easily made friends and exuded a natural charm wherever she went. I loved listening to this 'time machine' as she shared her wisdom and experience and her unique sense of humour. At the end of the semester we invited Rose to be guest speaker at our football

dinner. I'll never forget what she taught us.

'We do not stop playing because we are old. We grow old because we stop playing,' she said. Then she revealed one of her life's secrets. 'You have to laugh and find humour every day. And you've got to have a dream. When you lose your dreams, you die. We elderly folk don't usually harbour regrets for what we did, but rather for the things we did not do.' She concluded her speech by courageously singing *The Rose* and challenged us to study the lyrics and live them out in daily life.

One week after graduation Rose died peacefully in her sleep. A great crowd of students attended her funeral to pay tribute to the wonderful woman who taught by example the importance of living life to the full, and that it's never too late to be all you can possibly be.

Putting others first

While shopping with her family at the local pharmacy, Lisa ran into a friend whom she had not seen for many years.

'I saw him before he saw me. He had that look on his face of someone under immense pressure. It was obvious that he was a very busy man rushing to get to his next appointment. Yet, when he recognised me, his demeanour totally changed. He stopped and gave me a great big smile. "It's okay, I can see you are in a hurry," I said, urging him to continue on his way. But he insisted on warmly greeting my husband and each of my children, and asking after my parents. I thought: this is a good man who really cares about people.'



Builders

My two young grandsons came over for the day. The first thing we did was talk about how they wanted to spend the day. Building! So we set out for the nearby hardware superstore and we chose (very thoughtfully!) blocks of wood, then home to fossick for nails, paint, glue, etc.

Being a glorious sunny day, we set up our 'workshop' in the backyard, and we designed and built boats. These were duly painted. It may have been messy, but the boys were totally absorbed in what they were creating.

At the end of the project, after clean-up time and attention to blisters and scratches, one of my grandsons gave me a hug and said: 'Nanny, that was the best day ever!' (Patricia)

Share stories about:

- *God's presence in children*
- *Living life with child-like simplicity*
- *Putting others before our needs*

What can you learn from one another's Good News insights?



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

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