

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

The Lord to Jonah: Up and go! Jonah 3:1-5,10  
This passing world. 1 Corinthians 7:29-31  
Follow me... Mark 1:14-20

## Next week:

Presentation of the Lord.  
Malachi 3:1-4; Hebrews 2:14-18;  
Luke 2:22-40

## In a nutshell

Today's Gospel reminds us that discipleship is neither a hobby nor a fad but a way of life that requires single-minded dedication. Like those first fishermen, the disciple is one who hears the call of Jesus and sets out after him, regardless of the personal cost.

Lord, Fill us with 'a fire in the belly' for your mission!



## No stopping us now

Our 19 year old daughter had mentioned a few times that she would like to go to Africa to work as a missionary. At first I thought it was just a whim for the sake of doing something different. But then my husband and I realised she was genuine. In time her dreams started to take shape and she was accepted for an overseas placement with a Catholic agency. We wanted to encourage and nurture her as she prepared for this undertaking. We began to share our experience of what it meant to put God first in our lives. We explained to her that there would be moments of darkness, but also tremendous joys.

One evening she came home and I could see she had been crying. I asked her if she wanted to share what was troubling her. She immediately expressed what was in her heart: 'Now I know what it is to leave everything like it says in the gospel. It really means everything doesn't it, Mum? My stereo, my CDs and tapes and not having the car when I need it. It means leaving

you, Dad, the rest of the kids.' Her understanding of this touched me...

A few nights later she came into our bedroom and sat on the end of the bed, asking questions about going away. At first the questions were quite superficial, but after a while she said, 'Dad, could it happen that I might be killed or die in Africa?' I said nothing. The question was not directed to me and I also felt my husband would do better than me at a question like that. He said, 'Yes, you could, but we can't let that stop us, otherwise we would never do anything for God.' This answer may have come as a shock to her but she seemed happy and went off to bed.

The day came for her to leave. There were, of course, a few tears, but all had been said on both sides during the previous weeks and months. All detachments to one another and to things had been made. It was up to God to take care of her from now on. (M.D.)

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## A mission memory

A religious sister remembers... 'I recall the pain of parting with my family when I entered the convent. My father believed he would never see me again. This was back in the days when, after entering the congregation, religious sisters never went home, in many cases not even for a parent's funeral! Thankfully, the Church has changed its practices on this score. I now live near my parents and see them regularly. But at the time that I took final vows, it was a complete break.'



## church below the rooftops

### They left everything...

'As a young woman of 20, my aunt left everything to marry her husband. She left family, friends and homeland to settle with him in Australia. These were the days before people travelled widely. Australia seemed the end of the earth... How terrifying it must have been! But what a graced decision... Theirs has been a very special love story.' (TP)

## Think...Talk

A lot is asked of followers of Jesus. Specifically, what is this cost in terms of your own life?

Are you prepared to pay the price? What strengthens you in your response to Jesus? What hinders you?



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

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