

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

His reign is eternal. Daniel 7:13-14
I am the Alpha and the Omega. Revelation 1:5-8
My kingdom is not of this world. John 18:33-37

Next week:

First Sunday of Advent.
Jeremiah 33:14-16; 1 Thessalonians
3:12-4:2; Luke 21:25-28,34-36

In a nutshell

The price of witnessing to the truth is painfully clear in today's Gospel scene of Jesus before Pilate. Standing there as a rejected, humiliated and condemned criminal, Jesus speaks of a kingship 'not of this world', a kingdom where the measure of power and glory is loving self-sacrifice and total surrender to the desires of God.



Christ's longing

A reader shares this parable from her rural home.

I went to the lorikeets' cage and noticed the bowl was totally empty. Not even a sign of a grape remained. I moved aside to let the honeyeater fly into the cage, for the cage door is always open, except at night to keep out snakes. The honeyeater was hungry and wanted some breakfast. It had been a heavy week of constant rain, so no doubt the natural food supply had diminished. Hunger was driving this strange wild bird into a cage. Hunger was stronger than his fear of cages, or his fear of humans.

This flock of honeyeaters living around us are what we call intermittent feeders. They only come when their natural source of food is scarce.

I wondered if we would ever tame these wild birds? Would they ever trust us enough to be friends? We had to wait until they were first hungry, then offer them food with no conditions. Then we had to wait, for only time would give them

confidence, and then - perhaps only on their deathbed - they would rest in our hands.

Maybe the next generation would grow closer.

I suddenly understood Christ's longing and care for us, his wild birds. We were the intermittent feeders, driven by hunger to be fed by him, reluctant to give up our freedom and remain constantly in His heart of love. He patiently waiting for all eternity, crying down from the Cross, 'I am thirsty... quench my desire to be loved by you.'

And they gave him vinegar.

Think . Talk

Share a parable from your own life circumstances.

In what ways do you long for a different kind of world, a world where Christ's peace reigns?



Key ingredient

After years of teaching in Australian Catholic schools, this year I am teaching in an American public school. The kids are beautiful, but there are many problems in this area which are expressed at school. I am now acutely aware of the difference a spiritual ethos makes to a school. In Australia I used to be able to speak to my primary children about treating one another 'like Jesus would want us to' and they would all have some sense of what I meant. But here we just don't share those common values. I recall,

too, how in Australia we had school liturgies in church, prayer time with the staff... all these things had an impact on the school's atmosphere. I treasure it all the more now and miss this spiritual component in my current teaching scene. (Tracy)



Beyond this world

Reflecting on decades of devoted service to the Church, a religious Brother recalls the vocations application form which asked him why he wanted to become a Brother all those years ago.

'My answer - which would be the same today - was not to teach, or go to the missions or help the poor. My answer was that one day I wanted to see God face to face.'

In his comment I did not hear a self-centred 'get me into heaven' motive. What I heard was a profound sense of destiny, and an ordering of priorities. Beyond all earthly things - even our most noble Christian works - there is God. (Anna)



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

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