

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

Come, sit at Wisdom's table. Proverbs 9:1-6
Take care to live well in Christ. Ephesians 5:15-20
My flesh is life. John 6:51-58

Next week:

Crossroads for Jesus' disciples
Joshua 24:1-2,15-18; Ephesians
5:21-32; John 6:60-69

In a nutshell

Despite his listeners' objections Jesus offers his own body and blood, the gift of himself who is one with the living Father. The Gospel directs our reflections towards Jesus as our source of life. In our Sunday celebration we affirm our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus and anticipate the gift of eternal life.



'I shall raise you up'

In 1975 I was a Year 9 student and doing poorly in maths. I was advised to take the most basic level in Year 10 maths, but after a discussion with my parents the school allowed me to take the next level up which was Two Unit Maths. In Year 10 I had Brother Lewis as my teacher. Under his guidance maths quickly became my best subject and, in hindsight, affected the course of my life. If it wasn't for Brother Lewis and his gift for teaching maths I would not have been able to do science at university, I would never have got my PhD and almost certainly would never have enjoyed the success in business that I do today.

But there was more to Brother than his ability to get maths results. He lived his vocation as a Brother in a time of great change and challenge and yet my experience of him was of having a fundamental love of teaching and of God - both from which I am forever a beneficiary.

In April this year it was with a mixture of sadness and joy that I attended Brother's funeral. I felt sad at the loss of a great and faithful man of God. I also felt a deep-down sense of joy because I know that 'the Phonse' (as he was affectionately nicknamed) lives on! The gift of his life is not diminished but only magnified by eternity. I attended his funeral because I wanted to say thanks for what he gave me. I came away deeply inspired by the endless list of tributes from people he had touched in ways he could not have imagined - through a way of life I can emulate and touch my own sons and daughters.

I went to his funeral to say thanks and came away with yet another gift. Even in death Brother Lewis found ways to touch our lives. (BAP)

'I will raise you up!' Pray for somebody who has given you life, and who now enjoys eternal life with God.

Gift of a praying parish

As a priest living near a hospital I received an emergency call to anoint a dying woman. When I got there the elderly woman was unconscious. No one was at her bedside. The nurse explained that she was more or less alone in this world. No family members visited. There was only the executor of her will and one neighbour. As I sat and prayed by the bedside of this lonely woman, I was very conscious that I brought with me the prayers of my whole parish community. I would later ask them to pray for her. But

even now, having celebrated the Eucharist with them that morning, I felt that I carried with me their prayerful presence. Our parish prayer life is a great grace to be shared. (Vincent)



A precious symbol

One of my closest friends gave me an exquisite and rare orchid. In fact, this orchid had never flowered for her - even though she was an expert gardener.

Not long afterwards, my friends suffered a tragic accident and survived in hospital, unconscious, for about six months. During this time I took extra special care of her orchid.

When she died six months later, the orchid was actually in flower. Now, almost a year after her death, that same orchid has two budding shoots. I'm sure it will be in flower for her first anniversary. (PMS)

Reflect on an experience which impressed upon you the gift of eternal life. Perhaps this was a memorable funeral or time spent with a dying person.



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

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