

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

A life offered in sacrifice. Isaiah 53:10-11
Be confident in approaching Jesus. Hebrews 4:14-16
Can you drink the cup that I must drink? Mark 10:35-45

Next week:

Jesus heals the blind beggar
Jeremiah 31:7-9; Hebrews 5:1-6; Mark 10:46-52

In a nutshell

The message of today's Gospel is counter-cultural indeed. In rebuking the disciples for their squabbles Jesus points out that 'greatness' in the kingdom of God is not about ego-driven power and domination but loving self-sacrifice and humble service. Lord, may we recognise the truly great people in our midst and hold them up as role models to our children.



Fundamentals

A young mum shares...

We had been going along well in life. A couple couldn't ask for much more. My husband was a successful businessman. We had a nice home in a well-to-do suburb and we had just bought a bigger house. I was a busy Mum with a 15 month old daughter.

Then everything went wrong. My husband was retrenched from his job. The interest rates soared that year. We moved into the new home but couldn't sell the old home. Financially we were diving. Then I found out that I was pregnant again. I was upset as I felt I couldn't cope with another pregnancy or child at this point. We were really caught up in how hard life was, how we would juggle our finances and how Richard would find another job. Then our 15 month old daughter became very ill. I remember holding her at the hospital as she struggled to regain consciousness...seeing the tubes and oxygen masks that were keeping her alive...waiting for a sign

of recovery.

After a long day at the hospital, Richard and I walked away for a short break. We looked at each other with the same realisation: how insignificant the rest of our problems were. So what if Richard was without work? So what if we crashed financially or lost our home? This is what mattered - the life and health of our daughter (and in fact daughters plural as No 2 was born six months later). Here we had the greatest gift life could give us and we were in danger of losing her.

Thank God we didn't lose our little girl. Today she is a lively girl on the verge of adolescence - but we have never lost sight of the greatest lesson she taught us: life is a gift. It puts all our hardships into perspective.

Reconciliation starts at home

I watch my friend tend to her children whose playtime has just erupted into a fierce squabble and tears. I imagine it would be easy to just yell at them to 'cut it out' or 'give back the scooter' or to shoo them out the back, away from us adults who are trying to chat in peace.

But Sarah has great patience, taking the time to listen to each child's perspective and helping them to work out their differences. Whether it's a lesson in sharing or taking responsibility or letting go of one's own needs, I can see the children learning from her encouragement and guidance. If only our own adult world could benefit from such wisdom!



church below the rooftops

Brett is a tough and colourful character with a fierce loyalty to his Catholic faith. He loves to get into discussions at the pub about religion. His trump card is to say: 'I should know, my brother's a priest.' (And indeed he is.) Perhaps it's something of the 'shock' factor that Brett enjoys. People don't expect him to be associated with anyone or anything religious!

Late one night at the pub, at a well-chosen moment in a spirited discussion, Brett pulled out his trump card to score a point over his new drinking mate. 'I should know, my brother's a priest.'

Nothing prepared him for his mate's response. 'I should know. My brother's a bishop.'

Think of a time you tried to 'score a point' over a peer. Why do you think people get into 'point-scoring' games?

Lord, give us a deep sense of our true goodness and self-worth.



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

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