

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Love the Lord. Deuteronomy 6:2-6  
Christ the eternal one. Hebrews 7:23-28  
Love God. Love your neighbour. Mark 12:28-34

## Next week:

The generous widow  
1 Kings 17:10-16; Hebrews  
9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44

## In a nutshell

In response to a scribe's question as to which is the first commandment, Jesus replies, drawing deeply from his Jewish tradition. To be sure, the first commandment is to love God. But love of God is inseparable from love of neighbour. Genuine religious expression must go hand-in-hand with a sincere and loving commitment to other people.



## Love in action

*Love is powerful! Small, consistent daily acts of love can transform the world around us.*

## Some joy with your coffee?

Last Sunday we visited a friend in a community hospital who had just given birth to a baby. Making our way to the elevator, the tea lady was exiting from the same lift. She greeted us with a warm, beaming smile, held the lift doors open and pressed the first floor button for us. 'We just met the most wonderful tea lady,' I commented to our friend, Mary, when we found her room. I told her of our experience at the lift. Mary nodded knowingly. 'That woman is amazing! She remembers the names of all the babies who have been delivered. She takes a personal interest in us all. She delivers more than our meals - a lot of love and joy as well. As I said to the ward sister: "The tea lady really makes this place, doesn't she?" The ward sister replied: "People like her are the backbone of this hospital."'

## A kind heart

From the upper storey of my townhouse I could see two hesitant little feet outside the gate. I opened the screen door and stepped onto the deck to see a stranger of about seven looking up with a mixture of curiosity and concern.

'Are you OK?' I asked.

'Yes.'

'Do you need anything?'

'No, I'm just walking.' (How refreshing, I thought!)

'Do you remember that newspaper on your lawn yesterday?' he asked.

'Yes, I already had one so I put it near the letterboxes in case somebody else needed one.'

'Oh.' He wore a look of acute disappointment. 'I put it there for you.'

How I wished I had simply said 'yes' and given him the full satisfaction of performing a kindness! (TE)

## Christine's gift

The early stages of parenting can be frightening and hard! Christine is one of those special people with a gift for reassuring and empowering first-time parents. She is a trained midwife who specialises in helping mothers to breast-feed (Not as simple as it sounds!)

Christine's gift is her gentleness and her immense respect for the experience of each woman. Rather than hitting you with all the professional jargon she will say: 'Some mothers have shared with me that such-and-such helps...' She intuitively knows when you are ready for the next piece of advice and she's never judgmental. It is difficult to describe Christine's

gift but I am certain it comes from a beautiful part of her heart. It is God's love in action.



## church below the rooftops

## A childhood memory

My childhood was not an easy one, but I do have fond memories of those journeys home after a Christmas gathering or after one of my brothers' football nights. The whole family would be piled in the car, and Mum (who had usually had a few drinks too many) would sit in the back seat and say contentedly: 'Thank God we have so much love in our family!'

My brothers and sisters and I would quip, 'Aw Mum, you're just drunk!' But, alcohol or not, she was right. For all our problems and struggles, we really were a family who cared about each other, as we do to this very day. (Karen)

*Share stories about the power of love, and its many faces and expressions, in the people and events around you. Who has taught you most about love? Give thanks to God for this person.*



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

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