

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Hospitality rewarded. 1 Kings 17:10-16  
Christ's sacrifice. Hebrews 9:24-28  
A precious and generous gif. Mark 12:38-44

## Next week:

God is forever  
Daniel 12:1-3; Hebrews 10:11-14,18; Mark 13:24-32

## In a nutshell

Today's Gospel looks beyond the external appearance of words and deeds and probes our attitudes and motivations. While some of the scribes make a show of their religiosity, Jesus praises a poor widow whose small monetary contribution in fact reflects her complete gift of self.



## The humble 'cuppa'

The banner in the Retreat Centre caught my eye. It pictured a humble tea cup and the message read: *Make sure you make them a nice cup of tea when I'm gone. Catherine.*

These, I was told, were the words of the great and saintly Catherine McAuley (founder of the Mercy Sisters), spoken on her deathbed to her Sisters who gathered to pray.

Tea-making and the 'Afternoon Tea' were an art and an occasion in my childhood (the 1930s). We all learned the art of tea-making at the side of our mother, who in turn followed a ritual handed down from her own mother.

God is indeed in the ordinary, and what is more ordinary than making a pot of tea and sharing it with another? In the time taken for such a simple act of hospitality, friendships form, joys and difficulties are shared, crosses are made lighter. In our fast-food, fast-everything society do we lose sight of the opportunity of finding God in the humble cuppa? (Ken)

## Time to 'be'

For the first time in years I found myself with time on my hands. It took a while to get used to this unrushed pace (which lasted about six months). One day I dropped in to my sister-in-law's place with an errand and she offered me a cup of coffee. Out of habit I almost said, 'Oh no, I must run.' But then I thought: Where to? I don't have an appointment! So I stayed and had a coffee. And we chatted. And it was really nice! I came away feeling so... human.

Now I am caught up in being busy again and I am troubled by how little we stop to be present to one another. People wear their busyness like a badge of honour. 'I am so busy' means: 'I'm so important, so needed.' But I am not sure that love can really take root when life is lived in a constant state of fast-motion. (Louise)

## A woman of faith

I recall my mother's last words before her stroke in 1955: 'Don't upset me, I want to go to Communion tomorrow.' With that she collapsed. She remained very ill before passing away three years later. My mother was no towering person in the church or society, but I remember her as a woman of faith, hope and love who always welcomed those who came to her home. In sickness and in health she displayed these virtues.

I remember the day of her burial. We gathered with members of the youth club, work friends, extended family and a large crowd of Brothers. We were all there to

pay tribute to Edna Ellen McEwan, a valiant woman of faith. (KM)

*Share your own memory of a humble person of great faith.*



## church below the rooftops

### A no-fuss gift

*A single mother says:*

When our family was going through hard times, a number of generous people offered help. While I was grateful for it all, I think I most appreciated those who acted quietly and without fuss. Sometimes a parishioner would deliver a casserole, but then later would hold a discussion about how they cooked it and how much did we like it. We were made to feel so indebted for their kindness. By contrast, one couple asked me what I most needed and the next day a cheque just appeared in the mail. No note with it. No follow-up calls. Just the cheque. The subject was never even raised again.

*Share about a time when you were touched by the love of Jesus through a simple, humble gift or a gesture of care.*



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

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