

# realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



## In today's readings:

Listen to God's prophets. Deuteronomy 18:15-20  
Give your undivided attention to the Lord.  
1 Corinthians 7:32-35  
Jesus teaches with authority. Mark 1:21-28

## Next week:

The ministry of Jesus.  
Job 7:1-4,6-7; 1 Corinthians 9:16-19,22-23; Mark 1:29-39.

## In a nutshell

Taken together, today's readings suggest a recipe for true authority. Take your deepest faith convictions, ensure that they are grounded in the Word of God, witness to them with a gospel lifestyle, pursue them at all costs, and sprinkle with prayerful confidence. No wonder people listened to Jesus!



*In the world today there are many opinions as to what constitutes 'authority' ... from democratic systems of government to totalitarian regimes to the dynamics of parenting. For Christians, all genuine expressions of leadership point ultimately to the authority of Jesus Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The following, rather unusual, story serves to remind us that God's authority supersedes all human attempts to take charge.*

## Taking charge

The atmosphere at work was getting everybody down. There was a group of people on staff who seemed intent on spreading vicious rumours, sarcasm, sexist jokes, and a general lack of enthusiasm for honest, hard work.

As part of the management I tried everything: positive affirmation, humour, reorganisation of staff rosters, face to face confrontation. It all helped...to a point. But the basic problem persisted.

Eventually I decided that the only real solution was to call on

God to flex a spiritual muscle. I got the office blessed. Don't laugh, this is true! I contacted a priest mate of mine and we did it one Saturday morning, when the office was empty. I felt a bit funny standing around saying prayers and sprinkling holy water, but the effect was incredible. Within a couple of weeks, without any prior indication, the key people in that negative group had resigned of their own accord. (Dave)

*Boldly call on Jesus Christ to take charge of an unhealthy situation (while you do your bit as well!).*

## Parental perspectives

I grew up with a father who ruled the house with an iron fist. He was a good man in many ways, but *his* word always had to be the last word, and 'doing what you're told' was the essence of obedience. Quite frankly, I feared him.

Now I am a father of three teenagers myself. Fatherhood can be a difficult task, especially when it comes to disciplining your kids. It's hard to know when to put your foot down and when to be lenient. And it can be so hard to give proper attention to family issues when you have the pressures of work.

I don't always get it right. In fact, sometimes I feel as if I'm a lousy father. But I do my best, hoping and praying that if my kids grow up knowing just two things - that I love them and that I love God - then somehow I will have been a good father to them. (KP)



## Think . Talk

- Reflect on the life of a person (past or present) whose words and actions carry the authority of the gospel.
- In what way does this person inspire, reassure or challenge you?

## Pray . Act

- Pray for the grace of single-mindedness for the gospel, and the courage to speak boldly in the name of Jesus Christ.



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

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