

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



In today's readings:

A prophet in the doldrums. Job 7:1-4,6-7
Paul: the relentless preacher. 1 Corinthians 9:16-19,22-23
A day in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Mark 1:29-39

Next week: Lent starts.

Genesis 9:8-15;
1 Peter 3:18-22;
Mark 1:12-15

In a nutshell

Today's Gospel presents Jesus as healer. Healing is an essential sign of the life-giving power of the Good News. Healing frees us to be more loving, generous, courageous witnesses to the gospel message.

Like Jesus, if we are to heal and spread the Good News, we must develop a strong prayer life.



A story of how one family lives the gospel call to heal, pray and proclaim the Good News:

Sam

Our third son, Sam, was the easiest baby - happy, secure, contented. At primary school he was the angel in the nativity play for two years running. 'A beautiful child...a priest for sure...' according to the dear Sister who taught him!

However, in the jungle of secondary school peer group pressures, our Sam underwent a transformation. Whatever the reasons (and we still ask ourselves WHY?) he began to be in trouble at school and with the police. Court cases and fines followed. I can still recall the humbling shame of waiting outside the local courtroom in the company of people I would not have considered my company. (I do now!)

How did we cope with all this? Apart from the WHY? which we asked ourselves many, many times (and got no answers), all we could do was let him know that we still

loved him, although we did not like what he was doing. We also prayed a lot, telling God that Sam was HIS child, and begging that he find his way through all this without permanent damage.

Well, he's getting there. The turning point came when we received this letter:

*Dear Mum and Dad,
I am writing this letter because I have probably never told you how much I appreciate you... I am very grateful to have had wonderful, caring parents. I am sure that if I had not, I would be in a lot more trouble than I am. I know I have caused you some hassles and sleepless nights and I am sorry. I think I am a lot more stable now, and even though I do dope occasionally I don't let it affect my life. I am trying to get my life together so that you can be proud of me... Mum and Dad, I love you and I am grateful, even though it doesn't always show.*

Love, Sam.

Source: *Catholic Ethos* (No 12), National Catholic Education Commission. Used with permission.

The door's always open

My Dad has always held to a firm policy of: *Keep the door open. Or: Never burn your bridges.*

Even in the face of family feuds and communication breakdowns, he has never given up hope in the possibility of talking things through and working things out. It must have had some effect. I come from a family of eleven and, after all these years, we're still 'together', we're still a family. (Gary)

Take time...to grieve, to heal.

A nurse says: "There is a lady in our nursing home who is 102 and whenever she speaks it is always connected with the day 45 years ago when her husband dropped dead in front of her. If I greet her with, "Isn't it a lovely day!" she'll say, "He just died...there was nothing I could do..." I realise she still needs to grieve and I try to give her a chance to talk, but there is so little I can do for her under the constraints of work schedules and so on. I am painfully aware that if this woman had the opportunity to talk and grieve her loss 45 years ago, she could be so much more at peace today. There are just some things which need to be addressed in the present moment. If we put them off to tomorrow...next year...it may be too late.' (KGP)

Pray

Set aside time this week for some moments of prayerful solitude. You may have to get up very early, go to bed very late, or be very creative in order to find those precious moments...but find them and offer them to God.



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

A publication of
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