

Resources for your News

Sunday, 7 May 2017

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

John 10:1-10

1. In the Middle East, it was the task of the shepherd to find water and pasture and to ensure safety. In your life who have been the people who nourished you and gave you security? For whom have you done this?
2. Important to the shepherd's ability to give security to the sheep is the fact that he was known and familiar to them. They recognised his voice. Does this resonate in any way with your experience?
3. We are familiar with the image of Jesus as the shepherd. The image of Jesus as the door (or gate) is not so familiar but is one that merits attention. Jesus presents himself as the door through which we pass and find life. What are the doors through which you have passed and found life: a situation, a place, a book, an experience, a person? For whom have you been a door to a richer life?

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MUSINGS: Touched and Transformed

Those who are drawn by God's voice and determined to follow Jesus soon discover within themselves an irrepressible desire to bring the Good News to their brothers and sisters through proclamation and the service of charity. All Christians are called to be missionaries of the Gospel! As disciples, we do not receive the gift of God's love for our personal consolation, nor are we called to promote ourselves, or a business concern. We are simply men and women touched and transformed by the joy of God's love, who cannot keep this experience just to ourselves. For 'the Gospel joy which enlivens the community of disciples is a missionary joy (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 21).'

Pope Francis – Message for Vocations Sunday 2017

The first big moment of vocation is baptism. The anointing of chrism at baptism might be called the anointing for vocation. The baptismal vocation is for witness, love and service. This is expressed in ways in which people live out their baptism in married life, single life – and within the single life, maybe religious life or priesthood.

In a place of silence, let the words 'Come, follow me' echo in your mind and heart.

Lord, be with me as I offer myself in partnership with you to work in your world.

From Gospel Reflections for Sundays of Year A: Matthew
by Donal Neary SJ Messenger Publications

Sunday, 14 May 2017

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

John 14:1-12

1. 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me.' Trust in another person can help us in difficult times. Remember and give thanks for the people you were able to trust in difficult moments. Remember also when your faith in God helped you through anxious moments.
2. Thomas struggled with the desire, which is in all of us, to know exactly the destination before we set out. Jesus invites us to make an act of faith and to take one step at a time. Can you recall times when it helped you to take that trusting attitude to life?
3. Jesus proposed himself to Thomas as the way, the truth and the life. In what ways has Jesus been the way, the truth and the life for you on your faith journey?
4. Philip wanted Jesus to give him a glimpse of God and got the surprising answer 'Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.' Jesus put a human face on the love of God. He gives us a glimpse of the divine. We are Jesus in the world today, called to follow Jesus and to put a human face on the love of God for those who meet us. Who are the people whose love has helped you to believe in the love of God? To whom have you given an occasional glimpse of the divine?

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MUSINGS: The Centre Holds

The Gospel presents Jesus as the guide in life, the 'way, truth and life.' The Christian centre is the person of Christ. Our work for Jesus and our love for people, no matter what our calling in life, flow from this. Mother Teresa was once asked why she did what she did, and she simply said 'for Jesus.' This centre always holds, it cannot be unhinged. It is a deeply personal relationship: we are led by Jesus 'one by one', known by name, not as one of a group.

Prayer is the way of keeping our centre of conviction and motivation strong.

The Eastern approach to Jesus is very much the 'way'; while the African is the 'life'. The European stress is the 'truth'. In Europe we need to rediscover also the joy and vibrancy of the African and Latin American expressions of faith, and also the presence of God in all life's moods and journeys of the Indian and Eastern traditions.

We can get so caught up in small or even big truths and doctrines that we miss other centres of faith. All faith needs the balanced approach to Jesus – way, truth and life.

Recall people who guided you well in your life. Pray for them. Jesus, our way, guide me in life; Jesus our truth, teach me your meaning of life; Jesus, our life, love me always.

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Sunday, 21 May 2017

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

John 14:15-21

1. 'If you love me you will keep my commandments', and specifically the commandment to love one another (cf. 13:34). How have you experienced the link between love of God and love of those around you?
2. Jesus is preparing his disciples for his imminent departure and for a future in which he would be with them in a different way. He would not 'leave them orphans' but send an 'Advocate' to 'be with (them) for ever'. How have you experienced the presence of God with you in your life?
3. Perhaps you have also experienced the challenge of preparing another (a child, a friend) for a time when you would no longer be physically together. Recall how you gave the message of your ongoing support.
4. How have you experienced the presence and support of a loved one (parent, spouse, friend) when circumstances have separated you from them?
5. The proof of the ongoing presence of Jesus with his disciples is that 'I live and you will live.' Discipleship is about much more than rules and regulations. It is about being alive. How has discipleship helped you to be more fully alive?

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MUSINGS: The Energy of Love

St Teresa's prayer

Christ has no body now but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on this world.

Yours are the feet with which he walks to do well.

Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,

You are his eyes, you are his body.

Christ has no body now but yours.

Mostly we find Jesus alive in the love of others. The energy of love is connected to the energy of God, for God is love. Other times we find God close to us in prayer; but where we can sense him alive mostly is in the ordinary and extraordinary loves of every day, in marriage, family, friendship and care for others.

Many of us don't realise that in this way we have been Christ-bearers. In listening to another, in care of all sorts, in putting ourselves out for the other, in working for justice and for peace, the Spirit of God is alive and people are touched by God's love through the co-operation of ordinary men and women.

Pray a litany to some favourite saints.

Lord, make our love cheerful and kind.

Let us know always that human love reflects your love.

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Sunday, 28 May 2017

SEEING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

Matthew 28:16-20

1. Jesus meets the disciples for the last time. His final words give them direction for their future. Perhaps you can recall such parting moments in your own life – leaving home, school, college, or the death of a loved one. Was there an occasion when the words spoken to you gave you direction for the future?
2. Perhaps you can identify with Jesus in the story, when as a parent, teacher, or in some other way you sent someone on their way in life, knowing that you would not be with them as in the past. When did the way you parted help the other to make their way in life?
3. Despite this extraordinary encounter with Jesus some of the disciples doubted. Dealing with questions and doubt is part of an adult faith journey. How have your questions and doubts helped to shape the faith you have today?
4. Jesus commissioned this collection of believing and doubting disciples to carry on his work. We inherit that mission today. How do you see yourself as commissioned to continue the mission of Jesus?
5. Jesus told his disciples that although he would not be physically with them he would be with them in a new way right through life. Have there been times when you were reassured by the love and support of another even though they were not physically present with you? What are the things that help you to be aware of the presence of Jesus with you on life's journey?

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MUSINGS: Fully Alive

I asked a woman once if Johnny was in the house. She pointed at a chair and said, 'If he was here he would be there.' He never moved far! Jesus – he is here and there. The one who came to earth has now gone back to heaven, bringing with him all that is human. His body – the man of heaven and the God of earth – is now the Church, and that's us.

Before we are of any denomination or group, we are Christ's. We are baptised into the church of Christ; we live out our faith in different denominations. Today is the feast of the whole Church – we begin in him and end in him, like the Alpha and Omega, on the paschal candle.

On earth we are his body, with all our strengths and weaknesses, goodness and sin. Icons have Jesus smiling as he reaches heaven, smiling on us and living through us. We prepare for the way he is with us now next Sunday – in the Spirit. Where the qualities of the Spirit are alive, he is alive and well among us.

A breathing prayer – as you breathe in you notice you are breathing in the gift of life from God.

Holy Spirit, living in the Church, living in Mary, draw me more fully into your life.

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