

# SUNDAY PLUS

Food for life

A Year of the Word

## Food for the journey



Image: © Mazur/cbcew.org.uk

by Phil Ferguson

**K**halil and several other trafficked people travelled for several days in a relay of trucks and a small boat from Baghdad to Tripoli and thence to Britain,

not knowing where they were going and supplied with very little food and water. By the time the Coastguard and UK Border Force found them, they knew the meaning of hunger and thirst.

Khalil and his companions longed for food and drink to keep them alive on an unforeseen journey of horror. We can understand their fear, starvation and thirst, factors which are relatively easy to tackle with compassion and physical resources.

Yet there is also a second form of deprivation. Many people with well-nourished bodies experience spiritual starvation. Empty of hope, they feel imprisoned in life situations which seem to spiral out of control. Sometimes they suffer silently, feeling trapped and lifeless, scared to expose their internal desolation to others. Khalil and

his companions left Baghdad in search of freedom; these others yearn for a different sort of liberty.

Jesus reaches out to people experiencing spiritual starvation, promising life-giving soul-food and drink. He promises life that lasts "from the cradle to the grave" and then into eternity and beyond.

The Eucharist feeds us on our journey through life, in times of joy and sadness, boredom and excitement, companionship and loneliness, work and leisure. As Pope Francis declared, "Only if we journey together, will we be truly strong. With Christ, the Bread of Life who gives us strength for the journey, let us bring his fire to light up the darkness of this world!"

Phil Ferguson is a former teacher.

## Feed the heart

by Jimmy Mulgrew

Jesus fed the multitude on the mountain with only a few loaves and fishes. There were even leftovers. Some people had seconds and others took a carryout. Now that's what I call a miracle!

It was a double whammy because then he spoke to them. He was feeding their bodies and their souls.

At the Last Supper he blessed the bread, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take eat, for this is my Body." He then offered them the cup to drink to share in his Blood. We celebrate this and get closer to him when we take Holy Communion.

In the prayer he left us there's a line, "Give us this day our daily bread". When we say it we're asking our Heavenly Father to look after not only our earthly needs but also our spiritual necessities.

Jimmy Mulgrew, a comedian and entertainer, is best known by his stage name, Jimmy Cricket.

## Nothing more and nothing less

by Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

Have you ever heard of a thirteenth century nun by the name of Juliana of Liège? Possibly not, but to cut the story short, for about twenty years from 1208, in repeated visions, Jesus instructed her to ask the bishops to inaugurate a feast in honour of the Blessed Sacrament. Eventually, in 1246, the bishop of Liège ordered an annual celebration on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

In 1264, Pope Urban IV made this feast universal. It soon became so important that, today, 756 years later, a bishop is still obliged

to be in his diocese, "for the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, except for a grave and urgent cause." (Code of Canon Law, canon 395 §3)

Across the world, today, the Blessed Sacrament is celebrated in churches and in ways great and small.

Yet, however lavish or simple the occasion, the Eucharist reminds us that Jesus, as Pope Francis declares, "is in every human being, even the smallest and the defenceless."

Sr Janet Fearn is a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood.

**"Faced with the needs of the crowd the disciples' solution was this: let each one think of himself — send the crowd away!... But Jesus' solution goes in another direction, a direction that astonishes the disciples: 'You give them something to eat'."**

Pope Francis

**Lord of life, teach me to appreciate the importance of receiving you into my life through the Eucharist. May I love you more and more each time you come to me. Help me to spread your love to everyone around me, especially to those whom I know and love. ☩ Amen.**

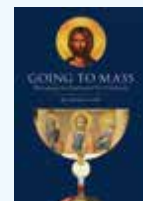
Going to Mass  
Fr Jim McManus

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*Fr Jim McManus considers how our understanding of who we are as people and as a community is expressed in our going to Mass.*



Today:  
Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16  
1 Corinthians 10:16-17  
John 6:51-58

Monday:  
1 Kings 21:1-16  
Matthew 5:38-42

Tuesday:  
1 Kings 21:17-29  
Matthew 5:43-48

Wednesday:  
2 Kings 2:1, 6-14  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday:  
Ecclesiasticus 48:1-14  
Matthew 6:7-15

Friday:  
Deuteronomy 7:6-11  
1 John 4:7-16  
Matthew 11:25-30

Saturday:  
Isaiah 61:9-11  
Luke 2:41-51

Next Sunday:  
Jeremiah 20:10-13  
Romans 5:12-15  
Matthew 10:26-33