28 February 2021

SUNDAY PLUS

"Only" Jesus?

Jesus-focused faith



by Claire Wright

As I write this, the coronavirus pandemic is at its peak and there is no Mass for us to go to on Sunday. During this time, we have been forced to radically re-think "church" and how to be Christians in the midst of the craziness.

Our family has instead been enjoying the ministries appearing online: live-streamed Mass, children's liturgies run from living rooms and family worship interrupted by shouting kids. It is strange, messy and real. I miss the Mass, church and community. But there has been a realisation for us in this time that we have sometimes relied more on those things than on Jesus himself.

In today's Gospel, Peter witnessed a moment of community between heaven and earth, almost as though he were at a Mass. And it is good, beautiful and holy. But when he suggests that they stay there forever rather than go back into the world to their daily, messy lives, the moment passed and they found themselves alone with Jesus.

As this pandemic passes, I hope we remember this - that we will hear Jesus call us out to take our faith beyond church-focus and make it Jesus-focused, knowing that he is with us in every moment of our lives.

Claire Wright is a Brighton-based freelance writer who runs a faith blog and a healthy family food website, all while taking care of two lively toddlers.

Total Jesus in a total way

by Des Kelly

In the Gospel we see pre-resurrection events like the transfiguration or Jesus walking on water. In these events we have to let go of Jesus as true man on one level before we can accept and believe in Jesus as true God. On Mount Tabor Peter, James and John, in a moment of ecstasy, saw Jesus when his divinity was revealed. They wanted to stay on the mountain, especially when they heard the voice from the cloud say, "This is my Son the beloved. Listen to him." Then, when they looked around, no one was there but Jesus. They were told to tell no one what they had seen and heard until Jesus had risen from the dead. This event revealed the total Jesus in a total way: true God and true man. Today how do people tend to relate to Jesus in their prayer life - more as God or man?

Des Kelly, a retired headteacher, now works to develop leadership in Catholic schools and parishes.

"Our faith is in the God of the living. Christ is alive and at work in our midst, leading all of us to the fullness of life. He is alive and wants us to be alive; he is our hope."

Pope Francis

The more I see you…

by James Gallogly

Seeing is apparently believing. Peter might have taken issue with this as he reflected on the events of the transfiguration.

Peter, James and John, though chosen from among the disciples and trusted by Jesus, would be found wanting. Their mountain top experience was one of rapture, this is it! Peter rushes in and wants to mark this moment formally. He believes, as fleetingly as the moment allows, that they can stay in the moment of triumph. Their work is done.

Peter, like us on so many occasions, is missing the point. Yes, there are grace-filled moments, some of them incredibly intoxicating. So often sacramental celebrations can be truly delightful high points, but how long does the fervour last? How much confirmation confidence survives secondary school?

When we emerge from the shadows are we lost or do we radiate the light of Christ? As the hymn puts it, "They will know we are Christians by our love."

James Gallogly is a Catholic lay chaplain in a UK prison.

My Lord and my God, I want to see you. Open my eyes and my heart. Amen.

Today:	Monday:	Tuesday:	Wednesday:	Thursday:	Friday:	Saturday:	Next Sunday:
Genesis 22:1-2. 9-13. 15-18 Romans 8:31-34 Mark 9:2-10	Daniel 9:4-10 Luke 6:36-38	Isaiah 1:10. 16-20 Matthew 23:1-12	Jeremiah 18:18-20 Matthew 20:17-28	Jeremiah 17:5-10 Luke 16:19-31	Genesis 37:3-4. 12-13. 17-28 Matthew 21:33-43. 45-46	Micah 7:14-15. 18-20 Luke 15:1-3. 11-32	Exodus 20:1-17 1 Corinthians 1:22-25 John 2:13-25

redemptorist publications **Sunday Plus.** Edited by Denis McBride C.Ss.R. and Sr Janet Fearns FMDM. Copyright © Redemptorist Publications, Chawton, Hampshire GU34 3HQ, A registered charity limited by guarantee. Registered in England 03261721. www.rpbooks.co.uk. Printed on FSC approved paper.

www.facebook.com/sundayplus