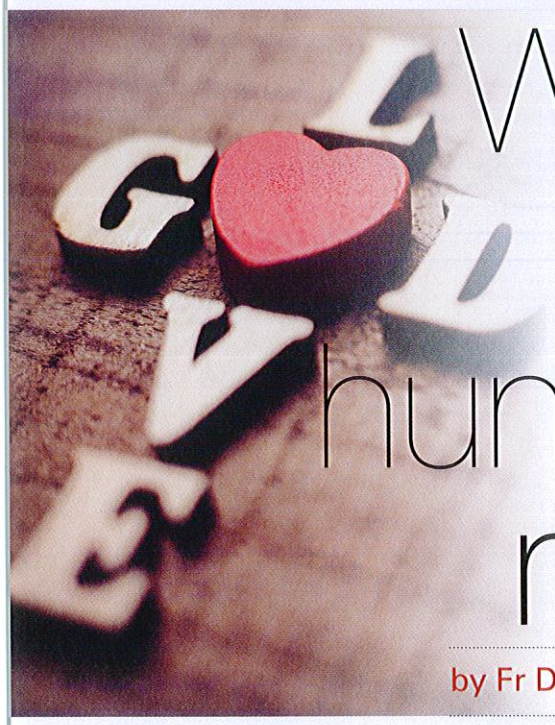
SUNDAY PLUS

Live with integrity



When two hungers meet

by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

In today's Gospel scene a Pharisee talks to Jesus about God. Nicodemus has arrived under cover of darkness and he misunderstands what the light of the world is saying to him. This gives Jesus the opportunity to clarify his meaning, so he declares: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son." God's supreme gift was given out of love, not out of a desire to humiliate or condemn the world. If God is greedy for anything, it is for people's acceptance of his love.

There is a divine hunger for human love – that is why God sent his only Son. So there is a human hunger for divine love – that is why God sent his Son. In the person of Jesus two hungers meet and two hungers are satisfied.

Perhaps we would come into the light more readily if we believed that the light we are entering is not the light of condemnation. If some of us are afraid of the dark, all of us are afraid of the light. We are afraid of standing in a place that is over-lit, exposed and defenceless. But that is a dark image of God. The purpose of the light is to enlighten, not to blind. God wants to see us in the light. After all, as the second reading tells us: "We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it."

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk.

Live in the light

by Mary Bell

People commended for their heroism often say, "I didn't think about it. I just acted on impulse." This disregard for their own lives is apparent in their selfless actions and rightfully recognised, sometimes with a medal.

However, there is the often unrecognised but also equally commendable heroism where someone knowingly and constantly puts their life at risk for the sake of others: carers for people with communicable, possibly fatal, diseases; volunteers ministering to wretched and neglected communities, often in places which we would avoid; ordinary people who generously devote their lives to many kinds of daily service, going out of their way to be helpful even if it means difficulty for themselves.

If Jesus goes up to Jerusalem he will be in grave danger. Yet he still intends to go. From the seed of his death will grow an infinite harvest of souls. He is willing to sacrifice himself in a voluntary act of pure love, supreme generosity.

This "heroism" is the price we must all pay if we want eternal life: to voluntarily place our lives into God's hands, showing our love by submitting to his will. No crucifixion for us, but instead, like Jesus, willingly accepting life's tribulations and rejecting the easier, more comfortable worldly way.

Mary Bell is a retired teacher, U3A lecturer and devoted grandmother.

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Let me see how you gave of yourself without ever counting the personal cost. Teach me to be generous, Lord, so that I might fill my little world with your love. ✝ Amen.

Sometimes it takes an emergency…

by Sr Janet Fearns FMDM

"It was basically down to either leave the kids in the cave to die or give it a go. If we brought them out, there was a chance some might survive..." Australian anaesthetist and caver Dr Richard Harris continued. "It was about a three-hour trip to get in each day to where the children were. The problem with the cave is that it was essentially zero visibility and very tight restrictions."

When rising flood waters trapped twelve children and their football coach underground in Thailand in 2018, the world waited in case the 7,000 volunteers needed help with the rescue.

Almost two years later, during the coronavirus pandemic, countless volunteers offered their time, efforts and resources in order to support the NHS, carers, key workers, people confined to their homes…

We all remember it, don't we? We saw the urgent need and prioritised. We worked together to save lives – and celebrated the sometimes hidden goodness in each other's heart. Sometimes it takes an emergency…

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

"If we wish to dialogue, we should do this in the first place with the poor. They are not just another party to be won over, or merely another individual seated at a table of equals."

Pope Francis

Today:	Monday:	Tuesday:	Wednesday:	(E&S) St Patrick (Feast):	Thursday:	Friday:	Saturday:	Next Sunday:
2 Chronicles 36:14-16. 19-23 Ephesians 2:4-10 John 3:14-21	Isaiah 65:17-21 John 4:43-54	Ezekiel 47:1-9. 12 John 5:1-3. 5-16	Isaiah 49:8-15 John 5:17-30	1 Peter 4:7-11; Luke 5:1-11	Exodus 32:7-14 John 5:31-47	2 Samuel 7:4-5. 12-14. 16 Romans 4:13. 16-18. 22 Matthew 1:16. 18-21. 24 or Luke 2:41-51	Jeremiah 11:18-20 John 7:40-52	Jeremiah 31:31-34 Hebrews 5:7-9 John 12:20-33

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