

SUNDAY PLUS

Real!

Really in us

by Paul Higginson

Imagine for a moment how the disciples must feel when they see the risen Jesus. Startled and frightened they think they are seeing a ghost. Jesus reassures them – “touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost does not have flesh and bones.” Jesus is telling his disciples, and us, that he is flesh and blood. He has lived among them and he still lives. This is the incarnation – God has become human. We are reminded of Jesus’ words earlier in his ministry: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink... in prison and you came to see me.” In other words the flesh and blood Jesus lives in each of us, including the

least of my brothers and sisters – he has not disappeared like a ghost: he is all around us. So take a look at your neighbours in church today – Jesus lives in them; take a look at your loved ones – he is there. And consider your “enemies” – he is present there too. Jesus tells his friends to go out and proclaim the Gospel to all nations. Perhaps we too can start by seeing Christ in all those we meet today and acting accordingly. And finally, when the day is done, we can look in the mirror and understand that the flesh and blood Jesus of the Gospel has made his home in us too – “you [are] in me, and I in you”. What a privilege and an opportunity!

Having recently retired from teaching, Paul Higginson is a catechist at the Sacred Heart church in Bushey.



Heartwarming

by Linda Jones

It’s difficult to know when to plant vegetables because the weather varies a lot during the springtime. Sometimes frost comes along and wipes them out. But some plants still make it through even the worst weather. They just need love and attention. A bit like some people, because we can all change. With care and love, we can make it through rough times. But we need people to be real, to be honest and straight up with us, and to stick with us. When Jesus appears to the disciples after his death, some struggle to believe that it is real. He has to reassure them. Is there someone you know who needs a bit of help at the moment, like a plant that has been hit by the frost? Is there a way you can be there for them? Because we can all change,

we can all start afresh and have a new sort of life.

Linda Jones is Head of the CAFOD Theology Programme and a regular contributor to Redemptorist Publications’ *Living Word* and *Weekday Living Word*.

**Dearest Lord,
teach me to be generous;
teach me to serve you
as you deserve;
to give
and not to count the cost,
to fight
and not to heed the
wounds,
to toil
and not to seek for rest,
to labour
and not to ask for reward
save that of knowing
I am doing your Will.**

St Ignatius of Loyola

The power of “real”

by Mary Bell

Human love mirrors divine love.

The engineer father of my school friend came to Britain from British Guyana during World War II. Here, he met and fell in love with her mother, an English woman. They married in spite of intense social prejudice and bitter opposition from her family (her brother never spoke to her again). Their love-match occurred at a time when mixed-race marriages were frowned upon. That love endured for seventy years until they died within hours of one another. He was a hundred years old. One of their two daughters became a religious sister, the other married and has two children.

Jesus tells us we can have no greater love than to lay down our

lives for our friends but it is a special kind of love that persists despite intense prejudice such as racism.

Jesus stresses the paramount importance of love. His love for his disciples brings joy but also his inevitable death. Love can bring great happiness but also pain.

One poignant postscript to this true story is that my friend, a nun, now a hospice chaplain, was at the bedside of her dying uncle. “Tell your mother I’m sorry,” he said. Unfortunately he died before his sister could accept his apology.

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

“We are invited to approach Christ with faith, opening our hearts to peace, joy and mission.”

Pope Francis

Today:
Acts 3:13-15, 17-19
1 John 2:1-5
Luke 24:35-48

Monday:
Acts 6:8-15
John 6:22-29

Tuesday:
Acts 7:51 – 8:1
John 6:30-35

Wednesday:
Acts 8:1-8
John 6:35-40

Thursday:
Acts 8:26-40
John 6:44-51

Friday:
Acts 9:1-20
John 6:52-59

(E) St George (Solemnity):
Apocalypse 12:10-12
John 15:18-21 or 15:1-8

Saturday:
Acts 9:31-42
John 6:60-69

Next Sunday:
Acts 4:8-12
1 John 3:1-2
John 10:11-18