

Reflection Friday Week 14

No one can say that Jesus actually encouraged his followers to go out and evangelise. If anything, he tried his utmost to put them off! Like so many things, the more you try to deter someone the more they want to do it – reverse psychology?? However, it would have been more the honesty of Jesus that would have encouraged them. They already had an inkling of the pitfalls and challenges ahead because the leaders of Israel were openly hostile to Jesus, and following him caused divisions in families and communities. They would also have recognised the trust and confidence Jesus had in them. They knew they did not understand everything and yet Jesus was still willing to send them out. He did not ask them to proselytise but to prepare the way. *“Tell them”, he said, “the kingdom of God is close at hand.”* He did not want them to persuade people but speak only to those willing to listen. The implication was that the Holy Spirit would do the rest. Remember that miracles only worked for those who believed, so it was evident that many did welcome the Good News and believed because of the miracles those first disciples performed. These new believers would have experienced what Hosea, the prophet, spoke about: healing forgiveness, a new sense of life, a discovery of inner beauty, fruitfulness and wisdom. Most of all they would have experienced the deep love of God for them. And they would have opened their mouths and proclaimed their praise of God. Pope Francis said: *Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God’s saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. (Evangelii Gaudium)*

Another short story

Bob was in trouble. He forgot his wedding anniversary. His wife was really angry. She told him *“Tomorrow morning, I expect to find a gift in the driveway that goes from 0 to 200 in under 6 seconds AND IT BETTER BE THERE!”* The next morning, he rose early and left for work. When his wife woke up, she looked out the window and sure enough there was a gift-wrapped box in the middle of the driveway. Confused, the wife put on her dressing gown and ran out to the driveway and brought the box back into the house. She opened it and found a brand-new bathroom scale. Bob has been missing since last Friday!!!!