

SUNDAY PLUS

Awe and wonder

"Only" does not mean "unimportant"

by Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

Have you ever heard of Dr Jean Meiklejohn? Probably not. She died in a remote Zambian village called Kasaba in 1943. Working with leprosy patients, the missionary doctor faced a dilemma. The local Missionaries of Africa with whom she worked were away, visiting nearby villages when Jean came down with malaria. Amongst her small supply of medicines, she had very little quinine remaining. If she were to treat her own malaria, those few tablets could deny

one of her patients the chance of life. Although it meant that she herself would die of blackwater fever, Jean made a momentous decision: she would not take the lifesaving quinine.

Today's Gospel describes Jesus' transfiguration. To the apostles' surprise, they saw the man whom they knew and loved speaking to Moses and Elijah, two of the most important characters of Jewish history. When they disappeared, Peter, James and John were left with "only" Jesus. That word "only" can be understood as meaning he was

Lake
Chifunabuli,
Kasaba, Zambia:
Dr Meiklejohn
died a few
hundred yards
away from here.



alone and also that he was nobody to fear. At that stage in their lives, they did not know the greatness of Jesus' sacrifice and its results for humanity.

Dr Jean Meiklejohn was "only" a doctor serving a few leprosy patients in a distant fishing village. Yet she considered people of whom

the rest of the world was unaware to be of immeasurable value and made a heroic decision. She gave her own life so that others might have a better chance of survival.

"Only" does not necessarily mean "unimportant".

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

No earthly king

by
Fr Dominic Robinson SJ

No earthly king. No political ruler. And yet Jesus Christ teaches all of us how to show true leadership in society. He is the good shepherd who searches out the lost, welcomes the outcast, shelters the homeless and feeds the hungry. He has no place for comfortable lip service to the values of the Gospel while modelling intolerance, closing doors to the stranger, widening the gap between rich and poor, the unacceptable and the unwanted. We will be judged, but not on status, wealth or achievement. Rather, justice embraces the merciful who show the compassion of God by opening doors and welcoming home to his flock all who seek him,

whatever they have done, wherever they are from, however much they find themselves on the margins of society. How much that leadership is needed in our world today! How much this feast of Christ the King teaches us about leadership in today's Britain!

Fr Dominic Robinson SJ teaches dogmatic and pastoral theology at Heythrop.

Lord, we take many things for granted and don't stop to think of the amazing world you give us. Today, let me take time to stop and thank you for your wonderful creation and for the gift of life. Amen.

A different joy

by Dr Lucy Russell

My multiple sclerosis was diagnosed when I suffered the temporary – but complete – loss of vision in my left eye. This loss of vision happened gradually, day by day, over about ten days. During the next ten days, my vision started to recover. On almost the same day as my vision seemed to have returned in my left eye, the same thing started to happen in my right. I was frightened. The cause turned out to be optic neuritis, an inflammation of the optic nerve. This began one late December. The natural world and I shared short, dark days. In all, the problems with my vision lasted about forty days, just like Lent. With spring and Easter came the most incredible reawakening. I can't describe the feeling of opening my eyes each

morning and being able to see a little bit more than the day before. I was so grateful just to be.

Dr Lucy Russell is the author of *Who do you say you are?*, available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk

“ Always remember: to listen to Jesus, to make our faith stronger; to gaze at Jesus, to prepare our eyes for the beautiful vision of his face, where we all — may the Lord grant us the grace — will be at a Mass without end. So be it.

Pope Francis

Today:
Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18
Romans 8:31-34
Mark 9:2-10

Monday:
Daniel 9:4-10
Luke 6:36-38

Tuesday:
Isaiah 1:10, 16-20
Matthew 23:1-12

Wednesday:
Jeremiah 18:18-20
Matthew 20:17-28

Thursday:
Jeremiah 17:5-10
Luke 16:19-31

Friday:
Genesis 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-28
Matthew 21:33-43, 45-46

Saturday:
Micah 7:14-15, 18-20
Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Next Sunday:
Exodus 20:1-17
1 Corinthians 1:22-25
John 2:13-25