

SUNDAY PLUS

Good news!

Speak with authority



by Dom Dominic Mansi OSB

Let me start by quoting from Nelson Mandela who brought about, in a non-violent way, the abolition of apartheid in South Africa. He was imprisoned on Robben Island for twenty-seven years. In his book, *Long Walk To Freedom*, he said: "People are not born to hate, they learn to hate and, if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."

Nelson Mandela had an aura about him which captivated friend and foe. It was said of him that he was able to make you feel as if you were the best person you could possibly be. Jesus had this aura too.

In today's Gospel people sensed this, "The people who heard him were amazed at the way he taught for he wasn't like the teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority. The Greek for authority is "exousia" meaning "out of your being".

Jesus was not laying down the law on this occasion. He was revealing his inner self by giving confidence, hope and healing.

We need people like Nelson Mandela, Ghandi and Churchill: people who can raise our spirits and give us hope amid all the difficulties surrounding us. They spoke with authority from within, just like Jesus.

We can speak with authority: inspire others to bring about the building of God's kingdom. Let these final words of Nelson Mandela ring in our ears: "We must therefore act together as a united people, for national reconciliation, for nation building, for the birth of a new world."

"Let there be justice and peace for all."

Dom Dominic Mansi OSB is a monk of Downside Abbey.

Really good news!

by Jo Siedlecka

The day Jesus threw out the evil spirits from the man in the synagogue was a breakthrough moment in his ministry. The Israelites had been waiting for so long for a prophet who could speak with the authority of God and be obeyed and here he was. The people were amazed at his power. But the messages today are not just about longing for and recalling past events that demonstrated the authority and power of Jesus. They are about becoming aware of God in every aspect of our own lives here and now, and not losing that sense of amazement. We are encouraged not to be resigned – even when things look really bad – because Our Lord has promised to stand with all of us until the end of time, against everything evil – all forms of war, violence, addiction, exploitation, abuse. This really is good news.

Jo Siedlecka is a Catholic journalist and runs the website Independent Catholic News, www.indcatholicnews.com

What makes a good teacher?

by Des Kelly

I would say my mum, dad, sisters, brother, wife, children and grandchildren – why? Because they love me. Jesus was a good teacher – why? Because he loves us. Thus love will always come before knowledge. My best teachers in school were people who knew me and were passionate about their subject. Teachers, like parents, are co-creators, with God, of the kingdom. Pope Francis states, "The educator in Catholic schools must be, first and foremost, competent and qualified but, at the same time, someone who is rich in humanity and capable of being with young people in a style of pedagogy that helps promote their human and spiritual growth. Youth are in need of quality teaching along

with values that are not only articulated but witnessed to." St John Baptiste de La Salle, patron saint of teaching, states, "To touch the hearts of your pupils is the greatest miracle you can perform."

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

“ Jesus’ word is the most nourishing food for the soul: it nourishes our souls, it nourishes our faith!

Pope Francis

Lord, when the media concentrates on doom and gloom, let me hang on to all the good news. Let me remember the positive moments of each day; the moments when I want to smile, when people are unexpectedly thoughtful; when I feel like jumping for joy. Amen.

Today:
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
1 Corinthians 7:32-35
Mark 1:21-28

Monday:
2 Samuel 15:13-14, 30;
16:5-13
Mark 5:1-20

Tuesday:
2 Samuel 18:9-10, 14,
24-25, 30 – 19:3
Mark 5:21-43

Wednesday:
2 Samuel 24:2, 9-17
Mark 6:1-6

Thursday:
1 Kings 2:1-4, 10-12
Mark 6:7-13

Friday:
Malachi 3:1-4
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

Saturday:
1 Kings 3:4-13
Mark 6:30-34

Next Sunday:
Job 7:1-4, 6-7
1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
Mark 1:29-39