

SUNDAY PLUS



LIVERPOOL 2018
ADOREMUS

God's message

God's challenge

by Dr Lawrence Osborn

We tend to think of Jesus' teaching as good news, but the reaction of many of his followers in these verses suggests otherwise. He has just made the great Eucharistic declaration that true life is to be found in eating his body and drinking his blood. Their reaction is one of horror: this teaching is "incomprehensible" (NRSV), even "intolerable" (NJB). Jesus has managed to mystify and offend most of his followers, and many turn their back on him as a result.

Jesus' response is not to moderate his message in any way. Rather, he warns that the realities to which those words point are even harder to handle, and he insists that his words "are spirit and they are life".

As the hangers-on desert him, he throws out a challenge to the Twelve: "Do you want to go away too?" Peter's answer is a pained "Who shall we go to?" They don't understand him. They don't like what they're hearing. But they trust that his message offers eternal life.

God's message, the Gospel, is not comfortable. It probes at things we want to keep hidden; it lays bare the secrets of our hearts. Sooner or later, it confronts us. It questions things our society takes for granted or even holds to be laudable. You call yourself a disciple and yet you live like that?

You say you love me, so how are you going express that love to that noisy neighbour, that homeless person, that drug addict, that refugee, that outcast?

Dr Lawrence Osborn is an Anglican Franciscan Tertiary.



Where else would we go?

by James Gallogly

The one thing that there is plenty of in prison is time. The phrase "doing time" is indeed apt. Often, when the dust clears and reality dawns, it becomes apparent that "doing time well" is a good plan of action. This can often come at the end of a traumatic and quite destructive journey but even the most violent hurricane will eventually blow itself out – in time.

At this juncture some find themselves entering a quite sacred space. It can be a truly new and enlightening experience or it might just be a return to childhood memories. Either way, God's message can be the difference between light and dark, good and evil... perhaps even a familiar sound that was never truly tuned in.

When one has been to these dark places and no smidgeon of joy has been found, it is fair to ask, "Lord, to whom else would we go?"

James Gallogly is a Catholic prison chaplain.

“**We are challenged to listen, not only to the words which others speak, but also to the unspoken communication of their experiences, their hopes and aspirations, their struggles and their deepest concerns.**

Pope Francis

Let God be God

by Sr Janet Fearn
FMDM

Have you ever hit rock bottom and realised that you have nowhere else to turn? You have run out of alternatives and supporters who can meet your aching needs. You realise that you have nowhere else to go: God has to supply the answers because, of yourself, you have none.

When Peter saw everybody leave Jesus, did his heart plummet despairingly downwards? Was this when he realised that, whatever the future might hold, he was with Jesus "for the long haul"? He had nowhere else to go.

When clinging on to God with the fast-disappearing strength of personal helplessness, those experiences of total emptiness are

often the opportunities for God to work in amazing ways.

When we have nowhere else to go, we give God the chance to be God. So often we work in partnership with God, but make ourselves the senior partner, subconsciously praying "My will be done". Let God be God. Amazing things can happen.

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

Lord, your message is one of love. As the World Meeting of Families draws to its close, we pray that families across the world may grow closer to you and to each other in love. Amen.

Today:
Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18
Ephesians 5:21-32
John 6:60-69

Monday:
2 Thessalonians 1:1-5, 11-12
Matthew 23:13-22

Tuesday:
2 Thessalonians 2:1-3, 14-17
Matthew 23:23-26

Wednesday:
Jeremiah 1:17-19
Mark 6:17-29

Thursday:
1 Corinthians 1:17-29
Matthew 24:42-51

Friday:
1 Corinthians 1:17-29
Matthew 25:1-13

Saturday:
1 Corinthians 1:26-31
Matthew 25:14-30

Next Sunday:
Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
James 1:17-18, 21-22, 27
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23