

SUNDAY PLUS



LIVERPOOL 2018
ADOREMUS

Join God's family

Redefining family

by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

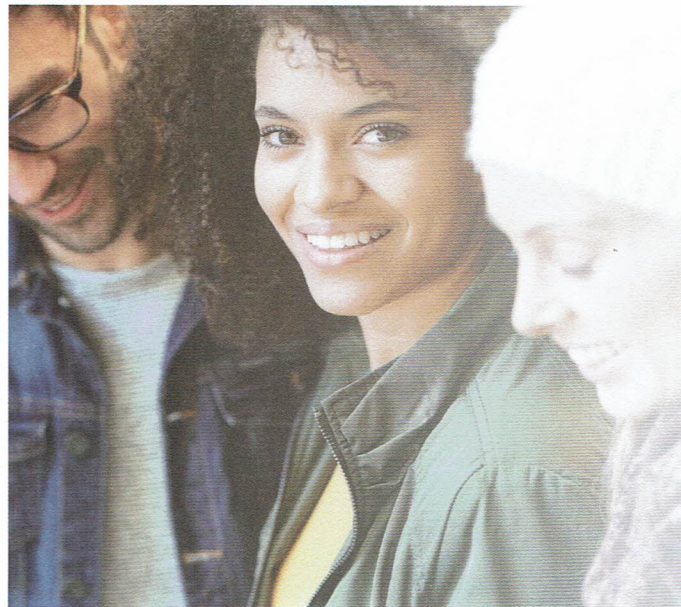
Where does the Jesus story begin? Mark's Gospel has the simplest answer: it begins when Jesus leaves home as an adult and travels south to connect with John the Baptist in the wilderness. While he is with John, he submits to John's baptism. We don't know how long Jesus spent with the Baptist: Mark says that when John is arrested, Jesus goes back north to Galilee and begins his new mission. John's arrest is the trigger for Jesus' new beginning.

When Jesus returns to his own region he gathers disciples, preaches and heals people. All this is radically different from what he did before he met John the Baptist. His relatives don't approve of the change as we hear in today's Gospel: "They set out to take charge of him, convinced he was out of his mind."

Some people do not like others to change: they want people to stay the same, stay put and remain within the boundaries of the familiar. They want frozen familiarity. They don't want to have to rethink who people are, admit that some people are much more than they first appeared, remain open to others' development. There is a tendency in human nature to keep people at the level at which we can handle them – avoiding any surprises.

Faced with rejection, Jesus moves an understanding of his real family away from blood ties, opening it out to all: "Anyone who does the will of God, that person is my brother and sister and mother."

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications: www.rpbooks.co.uk



Nothing more.
Nothing less.

by Katie Knight

Live in an African village and you will soon learn something about family connections. "That woman is the sister of my uncle's wife's grandmother's nephew's son"... and that sort of genealogical information comes without the speaker needing to refer to online databases. The amazing thing is that it's not a one-off phenomenon: everyone in the village can be equally precise. People might also distinguish between sides of the family: "brothers" and "sisters" may include maternal relatives, whilst "cousins" are paternally linked. Families believe that their ancestors still play an active part in decision-making: the extended family is a lived reality. Even the smallest children know their origins.

Jesus simplified his own family

relationships. St Matthew would later list the generations in Jesus' genealogy, probably expecting that Jesus would be able to recite them from memory.

Jesus, however, said that his family consisted of people who listen to him and do God's will. Nothing more. Nothing less.

Katie Knight is a freelance Catholic writer.

“We all know that families, especially young families, are often ‘racing’ from one place to another, with lots to do. But did you ever think that this “racing” could also be the race of faith? Christian families are missionary families.

Pope Francis

Who are my family?

by Sr Thérèse Garman
SMP

Jesus calls his disciples his new family. This is not a rejection of his biological family but an extension of the family beyond blood relations to everyone doing God's will.

Today, we welcome people into this new family through baptism. Membership combats loneliness. We've all lost someone in our lives and here we rediscover what it means to be together. It's also particularly meaningful for those from unconventional families who find a new family in the Church. A homeless person walking into our parish hall is our brother, our sister.

We all yearn to belong. We work with God to create this new kind of family where we are called to

love and accept one another as God has loved and accepted us. Jesus transformed the meaning of family and radically widened the concept to one where we share in the privilege and blessing of caring for one another beyond the circle of immediate family life.

Sr Thérèse Garman is a Sister of Our Lady of Providence.

Loving Lord, watch over my family, friends and all those whom I love. Be with them in all that they say, think and do. Increase their joy; lighten their burdens; dry their tears. Bring them close to you. Amen.

Today:
Genesis 3:9-15
2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1
Mark 3:20-35

Monday:
Acts 11:21-26; 13:1-3
Matthew 10:7-13

Tuesday:
1 Kings 17:7-16
Matthew 5:13-16

Wednesday:
1 Kings 18:20-39
Matthew 5:17-19

Thursday:
1 Kings 18:41-46
Matthew 5:20-26

Friday:
1 Kings 19:9, 11-16
Matthew 5:27-32

Saturday:
1 Kings 19:19-21
Matthew 5:33-37

Next Sunday:
Ezekiel 17:22-24
2 Corinthians 5:6-10
Mark 4:26-34