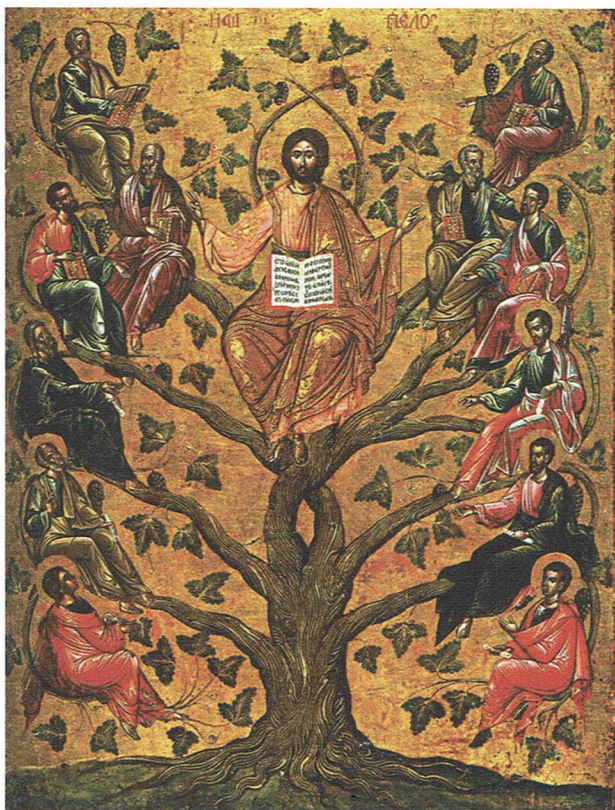


# SUNDAY PLUS

## Silence speaks



"I am the vine, you the branches" Christ the True Vine icon, Eastern Orthodox icon/ Wikimedia commons

# It's worth sharing

by Bridie Stringer

**T**oday's Gospel is taken from that part of John's Gospel which is known as "The High Priestly Prayer" of Jesus. It comes immediately before his betrayal and passion. Here, Jesus is having a deep, almost philosophical, conversation with his heavenly Father rather than going off to a quiet place to reflect and pray as he does in the Gospels of Mark and Luke. It's as if Jesus is saying to his friends: "Let me explain this to you." In John's account, Jesus prays aloud at the supper table and assures his friends that the relationship he has with the Father will be shared with them too and with those who will

become their followers. That means us! He is promising us that we will all see his glory, will become part of that glory and that we "may be one." Of course the irony is that at present we are not all one. Not even those who see themselves as faithful members of Churches could say that we are one. The message is not about cloning our members so that we are all exactly the same or that we claim exclusive truth at the expense of the others. It is a message about love: the total love of the Father for Jesus, the total love of Jesus for his Father and the sharing of that love with us, the Eucharistic body of Christ. It is a message worth sharing as it is very good news – Gospel in fact.

Bridie Stringer is married with two daughters, a son-in law and "two adorable grandsons".

## Children need love

by Dame Mary Richardson

I could see him dawdling in class at the end of the day. He wanted to be the last, to speak alone with his teacher. At last he came to my desk and stood, pale and silent. "Are you going home now?" I asked cheerfully. "No," he said. "This morning my Mum said I must never go back. Where shall I go?" Everyone understands Jesus' frustration when he was not able to communicate, to "get through." Sometimes communication is by much more than words. The child's agonising fear, as he had moved through that terrible day, had not got through to me. Now I had heard at last.

In today's Gospel, Jesus prays passionately that the Father will keep his disciples safe and that the love the Father has for him, may be in his disciples too. Our expressed love is the blessing that comforts and heals our hurt and wounded children everywhere.

Dame Mary Richardson has worked with young people all her life and was awarded a DBE in 1999 for her services to education.

**Speak to me, Lord. Speak your word into my heart. Let it be open to hear what you have to say and then give me the courage and energy to put it into practice in my life ☩ Amen.**

## No need to shout!

by Cowan Watson

Have you noticed that those who speak loudly and at great length frequently have very little to say! Strangely, in today's world this facility to talk endlessly about nothing very much often seems to be admired. Perhaps, on this World Communications Day, it's worth remembering Elijah's experience of God communicating: not in the wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire but after the fire in a gentle whisper. The Church has an indispensable mission to proclaim the true knowledge of God and to do that effectively. It has an obligation to use all the means of modern communications at its disposal to make its voice heard.

However, as Christians, we must remember to allow ourselves time in which to seek out the silence, so as not to miss that gentle whisper. After all, God is within us. He shouldn't need to shout.

Cowan Watson is the Editor of *Light of the North*, a quarterly magazine produced by the Diocese of Aberdeen.

**"Communicating means sharing, and sharing demands listening and acceptance. Listening is much more than simply hearing. Hearing is about receiving information, while listening is about communication, and calls for closeness."**

Pope Francis

Today:  
Acts 7:55-60  
Apocalypse 22:12-14,16-17, 20  
John 17:20-26

Monday:  
Acts 19:1-8  
John 16:29-33

Tuesday:  
Acts 20:17-27  
John 17:1-11

Wednesday:  
Acts 20:28-38  
John 17:11-19

Thursday:  
Acts 22:30; 23:6-11  
John 17:20-26

Friday:  
Acts 25:13-21  
John 21:15-19

Saturday:  
Mass in the Morning  
Acts 28:16-20, 30-31  
John 21:20-25

Next Sunday (Pentecost):  
Acts 2:1-11  
Romans 8:8-17  
John 14:15-16, 23-26