

# SUNDAY PLUS

Who's the fool?

## Grand Passion

by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

**B**y the time the passion gets under way there is nothing to shout about. Processions that follow messiahs are triumphant affairs; processions that follow condemned criminals are timid by comparison, shabby affairs made up of those who have to be there and the curious who can never be mistaken for disciples. When the passion comes, it brings with it a pressing question: can you still attach yourself to this man when all the authorities are ranged against him? Can you still believe in Jesus when you face the direction of Golgotha?

Jesus himself presses on to the end. When we speak of the passion of Jesus we usually mean the suffering and death inflicted on him. But the passion is not just something that is done to Jesus by others: it is a power within Jesus, his passion that enables him to face the violence and the pain.

Throughout his ministry Jesus has revealed the reaches of his own passion: his undying urge to do his Father's will; his preference for those who have been abandoned; his fury at a religious authority that only invents new burdens for people; his energetic love for those who suffer in life; his open disappointment with those who are economical with love and forgiveness; his outlandish attachment to those who count themselves worthless; his loyalty to those who have deserted him. None of this emerges from a man who is timid and frugal in his ways: it reveals a man of grand passion.

In the end the cross comes as no surprise: it is the penalty for making a habit of such extravagant love.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, [www.rpbooks.co.uk](http://www.rpbooks.co.uk)

Image / The Passion façade, Sagrada Família Church, Barcelona, Spain. Joyce Nelson / Shutterstock.com



### The right track

by Daniel Kearney

The poet Philip Larkin wrote, "Always too eager for the future, we Pick up bad habits of expectancy". One such bad habit, so often a root cause of many of our self-inflicted woes and worries, is that of impatience. We are invariably too eager for something else – relationships, jobs, whatever – and foolishly focussing on what's next, we are too impatient to enjoy what we have and hold at present. It is a sad and all too familiar regret to hear people say, "if I could have my time again I would do things differently".

Starting out on the right track is never easy but it is essential if we are to arrive at the right destination. Just as every journey starts with a single step, so too does our

own road to self-fulfilment and personal happiness. We have to be prepared to start where we are and not always where we desire to be.

Daniel Kearney is a former headmaster and teacher of Religious Studies.

**"Impossible as it may seem, Jesus proposes a different way of doing things: the way of meekness. This is what we see him doing with his disciples. It is what we contemplate on his entrance to Jerusalem: 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey.'"**

Pope Francis

### Upside-down: a new way of living

by Sr Thérèse Garman SMP

When pondering how we can become great, the example of kneeling down before another person and washing their feet doesn't immediately spring to mind. Jesus' disciples just didn't understand these upside-down ways Jesus chose to act. And, what's more, he expected them to do the same!

He had reached out to people who were marginalised, poor and despised; healed the broken and infirm and, at this Last Supper, welcomed Judas who would betray him, Peter who would deny him and others who spent their time discussing who among them was the greatest. For three years, Jesus had

longed for his disciples to discover, from his teaching and example, the true nature of discipleship, pointing them towards a new way of self-giving love, by serving others in a broken world as bearers of light and hope. Now Jesus calls us to embrace this new definition of greatness.

Have we grasped this message? Have we the courage to embrace this grace-filled upside-down way of living?

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

**Lord, you must have felt a bit scared as you rode into Jerusalem. You knew the cheers would soon turn to jeers. Help me to be brave when I face opposition for doing what is right. Amen.**

**Today:**  
Procession: Luke 19:28-40  
Mass: Isaiah 50:4-7  
Philippians 2:6-11  
Luke 22:14 – 23:56

**Monday:**  
Isaiah 42:1-7  
John 12:1-11

**Tuesday:**  
Isaiah 49:1-6  
John 13:21-33, 36-38

**Wednesday:**  
Isaiah 50:4-9  
Matthew 26:14-25

**Thursday:**  
Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper:  
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14  
1 Corinthians 11:23-26  
John 13:1-15

**Friday:**  
The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord:  
Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12  
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9  
John 18:1 – 19:42

**Saturday:**  
The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night:  
Genesis 1:1 – 2:2  
Genesis 22:1-18

Exodus 14:15 – 15:1  
Isaiah 54:5-14  
Isaiah 55:1-11  
Baruch 3:9-15, 32 – 4:4  
Ezekiel 36:16-28  
Romans 6:3-11  
Luke 24:1-2

**Next Sunday:**  
Acts 10:34, 37-43  
Colossians 3:1-4 or  
1 Corinthians 5:6-8  
John 20:1-9