

# SUNDAY PLUS

Search and find

## Having forgiveness at the ready

by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

**P**aul celebrates the ever-forgiving Christ when he writes in today's second reading: "God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us." If forgiveness is of the nature of Jesus, so it should be an essential part of our own nature as his followers.

Paul hopes that other Christians could come to the same truth that he had experienced. The persecuted Christ who forgave Paul did not take delight in Paul's wrongdoing. Like the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son, God's forgiveness does not reduce the wrongdoer to a miserable servant, but reaffirms his worth as a son. This is appreciative grace: the grace that builds up, the grace that affirms, the grace that

allows a new future. That experience delighted Paul. He started doing the same himself. Paul hoped that forgiveness would catch on.

We know from experience that there is a kind of forgiveness that is used to humiliate other people, one that exploits people's shame and fixes on their past wrongs. This kind of forgiveness is a new sin. Jesus never uses forgiveness to humiliate people but to release them. It is not just that Jesus forgives: it is the way that he forgives – which is what we mean by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul believed that if we keep Christ's forgiveness before us, that image will keep us from self-righteousness. If the forgiving Christ stands before us, it becomes more difficult to refuse forgiveness to those who have sinned against us.

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



### Look inside

by Daniel Kearney

We have all, at one time or another, been at the sharp end of other people's judgments and views about what sort of person they think we are. Similarly, we have also often been quick to form snap judgments on others. Why we do so, who knows? It's probably for a whole raft of reasons and insecurities about our own identity and outlook on life. I have read that the more you know yourself, the more tolerance and empathy you have for what you see in others. We might think it's too much to ask everyone we meet to see the "real me" if they have yet to look inside themselves to first see who they are. Perhaps it's only the people

who love us and know us who will, in the end, have truly seen who we really are. After all, nothing else really, truly matters.

Daniel Kearney is the author of *Adult Bullying and Childhood Bullying: caring for yourself and others*, available from Redemptorist Publications, [www.rpbooks.co.uk](http://www.rpbooks.co.uk)

**Lord, in all the ups and downs of hassles and complications of daily life, please let me keep my eyes and my heart fixed on you ☩ Amen.**

### Search for loveliness

by Sue McDermott OBE

Having driven 109 miles along the M62, I arrived rather tired and apprehensive at a large school. I was there to offer support to staff in bereavement and loss following a number of deaths.

On arrival I sensed I was entering a special school – not because of its name but because of the sign: "Peace to all who enter here". The welcome I received from the receptionist echoed the sign. Her smile, her words and her actions relaxed me; I felt safe, secure and welcome.

Having trained and supported staff in hundreds of schools, I know that where there is such love there is

God. This school, like so many I have visited, was alive with loveliness. Highly professional staff having good days and bad days "loved" their pupils, each other and parents and carers. Sometimes we just need to experience each other to find the "diamonds" in our midst.

Sue McDermott OBE the Non-Executive Director of Rainbows Bereavement Support GB, is also the author of *Children and Loss: caring for yourself and others*, available from Redemptorist Publications, [www.rpbooks.co.uk](http://www.rpbooks.co.uk)

**"God alone can give us true happiness. It's useless wasting time looking for it elsewhere: in wealth, pleasure, and power."**

Pope Francis

**Today:**  
Genesis 18:20-32  
Colossians 2:12-14  
Luke 11:1-13

**Monday:**  
1 John 4:7-16  
John 11:19-27 or  
Luke 10:38-42

**Tuesday:**  
Exodus 33:7-11; 34:5-9. 28  
Matthew 13:36-43

**Wednesday:**  
Exodus 34:29-35  
Matthew 13:44-46

**Thursday:**  
Exodus 40:16-21.  
34-38  
Matthew 13:47-53

**Friday:**  
Leviticus 23:1. 4-11.  
15-16. 27. 34-37  
Matthew 13:54-58

**Saturday:**  
Leviticus 25:1. 8-17  
Matthew 14:1-12

**Next Sunday:**  
Ecclesiastes 1:2; 21-23  
Colossians 3:1-5. 9-11  
Luke 12:13-21

