

SUNDAY PLUS

Rich harvest

Just do it!



Jesus Teaches the People by the Sea by James Tissot. Brooklyn Museum, Purchased by public subscription.

by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

After Jesus appoints seventy-two other disciples he gets them to hit the road and prepare the towns and villages for his coming. This seems surprising in today's world where candidates spend years in formation and education before being trusted to minister with authority. There is a clear sense of urgency to Jesus' mission: clearly Jesus does not have the time to closet the new disciples in a remote seminary in the hills of Galilee and train them thoroughly for the mission ahead. He has already experienced the opposition of the authorities; he has a sense of a limited time left to him; he has to begin his outreach programme immediately.

More importantly, he has to make a huge act of trust that his new disciples will manage the task with commitment and talent. How well, we might ask, did the disciples know Jesus personally? Could they speak

with confidence and authority about his values and preferences? Had they yet borrowed his eyes to see as kindly and generously as he saw people? We don't know. The Gospel tells us, however, that his disciples returned rejoicing in the success of their ministry – confusing ministry with achievement. Jesus tells them to rejoice, not in recent success, but that their names are written in heaven.

Sometimes we get lucky, dear friends, and people genuinely appreciate what we do. But we should not base our life on our luck. We should base it on the deep ground of our being, on the voice that calls from the deep of God to our deep, the voice that says, : "I have loved you with an everlasting love." All the rest, dear friends, is fortune or misfortune.

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

Reach the children

by Sue McDermott OBE

As a wife, mother and grandmother, I've always believed home to be a holy place. When our children were little, our home was indeed "my church."

Our priest loved to visit the "domestic churches" in our parish. We both knew that a home is a holy place where God lives, and we had a responsibility to support and nurture the children in all our families.

While we cannot underestimate the great strain on family life that poverty brings, we must also acknowledge the "poor little rich kids" who appear to have everything but in truth have so little.

Perhaps our parish priorities need to be directed to all our holy homes,

however poor or rich, messy or confused as some of them may be, for it is there that our God truly lives.

Does our parish acknowledge the holiness of these homes; for then the harvest will be rich indeed?

Sue McDermott OBE, 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

"With young people one should never be scared. Never. Because always, even behind the things that are not so good, there is something that will bring us to some truth."

Pope Francis

Harvest the hearts

by Dr Lucy Russell

A colleague copied me into an email in which she listed all of her needs for an upcoming open day. From what I could glean I was to lose my only free period and would be required to run workshops for visiting pupils; I would need to plan cover work for my timetabled classes and rearrange planned practical lessons with less than a week's notice. There wasn't a please or thank you. Humpf! I held off replying and reflected: I might lose my free period but the day included a Mass in which I would now be able to take part and I would enjoy running the workshops. I sent a positive

message to clarify what was being asked of me. Face-to-face in the staff room, my colleague explained that some staff had been difficult since she sent her message and thanked me for my support. Sometimes providing labourers for the harvest needs dialogue as well as generosity.

Dr Lucy Russell's book, *Who do you say you are?* is available from Redemptorist Publications: www.rpbooks.co.uk

Lord of life, bless all young people everywhere. Let them infect the world with joyful energy, enthusiasm and hope. Help them to see their dreams come true. Give them good mentors as they journey into the future Amen.

Today:
Isaiah 66:10-14
Galatians 6:14-18
Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

Monday:
Genesis 28:10-22
Matthew 9:18-26

Tuesday:
Genesis 32:23-33
Matthew 9:32-38

Wednesday:
Genesis 41:55-57;
42:5-7, 17-24
Matthew 10:1-7

Thursday:
Genesis 44:18-21.
23-29; 45:1-5
Matthew 10:7-15

Friday:
Genesis 46:1-7.
28-30
Matthew 10:16-23

Saturday:
Genesis 49:29-33; 50:15-26
Matthew 10:24-33

Next Sunday:
Deuteronomy 30:10-14
Colossians 1:15-20
Luke 10:25-37