

SUNDAY PLUS

Try again!

Success is possible

by Sr Janet Fearn
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It's easy to sympathise with Peter. He and his companions had worked hard all night, achieving nothing. Tired, hungry and exasperated, they gave up, turned their boat towards the shore and saw Jesus standing there. They were probably delighted to see him, but, as professional fishermen, did they need a carpenter telling them where to find fish? We can almost hear Peter's

studied patience as he said to Jesus, "Look, we've been trying all night and have got nowhere. Just to keep you happy, we'll have one more go but I can tell you in advance that we'll find nothing."

How tired the apostles must have felt, setting sail once more, letting down the nets and, perhaps with an attitude of "I told you so", pulling them in – and therein lay their surprise. The catch of fish was huge, threatening to sink the boat with its weight. How their exhaustion must have disappeared, swallowed up in excited achievement. The journey



to the shore and the fish market must have seemed quick and almost effortless.

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again." It's a familiar proverb which we sometimes ignore and sometimes take seriously. The extra push often brings the hoped for results and a highly satisfying sense of accomplishment.

Yet we seem to expect instant success with life's biggest project: that

of life itself. We anticipate mistakes when learning a new skill but can be impatient regarding our spiritual progress. Why is it so hard to become patient, generous, forgiving, understanding? Perhaps it would pay to listen to Jesus telling us to "try, try and try again." With his help, success is possible.

Sr Janet Fearn is a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood.

Have faith!

by Paul Nizinskyj

One of the most poignant scenes of the 2010 film *The King's Speech* sees the stammering Duke of York, later George VI, recite from *Hamlet* to a voice coach while the sound of his own voice is blocked out by Mozart, pumped through a pair of headphones.

Having failed once to recite the passage unaided, he is sceptical and, half-way through, tears off the headphones in frustration and leaves. Only later, while listening back to a recording of the recital, does the future king realise he spoke flawlessly and that his impediment was purely psychological.

The Duke lacked faith, both in himself and in his voice coach, and only reluctantly did what the latter asked because he was a professional

trainer. But our relationship with God is so much more: that of a loving Father and his children. Think what more we, ourselves, can be if we just have faith.

Paul Nizinskyj is a local government officer and freelance journalist.

Lord, I can understand the frustration of the apostles. You, a carpenter, told fishermen where to fish. Yet they trusted you, made one last effort and were successful. Help me, when I think that my plans have failed, to take a deep breath, remember you and try once more. Amen.

If at first you don't succeed...

by Mary Bell

Among the most uplifting experiences of my life was attendance at some of the sessions of the Paralympic Games. In a packed Olympic stadium, athletes with severe disabilities competed to the tumultuous appreciation of the spectators.

No room here for pity. There was only intense admiration for the human spirit that could rise above the loss of legs, arms or sight to achieve amazing distinction. And the cheering was no less loud for the competitor who forced himself around the track two laps behind the other runners to complete the course.

Forget the many tales of failure and misery so beloved of the media. People have in them the capacity for

incredible endurance: think of those like the life-boat service who voluntarily come to the rescue of others.

Equally to be admired are stroke victims who learn to walk and talk again.

With persistence small successes become remarkable achievements.

Mary Bell is a grandmother and a retired teacher who continues to use her skills in the University of the Third Age.

“**God does not disappoint! He has placed hope in our hearts so that it can blossom and bear fruit.**

Pope Francis

Today: Isaiah 6:1-8 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 Luke 5:1-11	Monday: Genesis 1:1-19 Mark 6:53-56	Tuesday: Genesis 1:20 – 2:4 Mark 7:1-13	Wednesday: Genesis 2:4-9. 15-17 Mark 7:14-23	Thursday: Genesis 2:18-25 Mark 7:24-30	Friday: Genesis 3:1-8 Mark 7:31-37	Saturday: Genesis 3:9-24 Mark 8:1-10	Next Sunday: Jeremiah 17:5-8 1 Corinthians 15:12. 16-20 Luke 6:17. 20-26
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