

SUNDAY PLUS

Be generous

A heart full of love

by Fr Royston Price C.Ss.R.

The Gospel today is quite forceful in reminding us of a pitfall to be avoided in our Christian life, as well as the corrective for it. John reports an instance of someone doing the Lord's work, but who isn't part of their group: surely they should be stopped? Jesus tells us that there can be no room for factionalism or cliques within the Church. We might belong to some group or movement, but we should be very careful about our attitude to the apostolic work of others. The Church isn't a "one-party state" and there is plenty of room for legitimate variation in spirituality, culture and emphasis. What does matter is being grounded in Jesus Christ: Love made flesh.

The centrality of love is Our Lord's answer to the problem of factions and

divisions. Our actions, thoughts and entire life should be infused with divine love. When we are acting in love, then whatever we do can be a way of spreading the Kingdom of God. Even something objectively tiny like offering someone a glass of water, when done out of love acquires a tremendous and eternal dignity.

When our heart is full of divine love, then we can appreciate the unity and diversity of the Church. The body of Christ is made up of many members and each of us is called to a unique mission and ministry; as long as we are deeply rooted in Christ, then we can see the work of others not as a threat to our own cherished projects, but as another part of the wonderful work of God in the world.

Fr Royston Price, a recently ordained priest, is the Vocations Director for the Redemptorist London Province.



Lord of love, you invite us to give "not less than everything" when we follow you. Teach us to give mercy, compassion, companionship and love to the people we meet on our journey towards you. Amen.

Be merciful

by Katie Knight

Her visit to A&E with a feigned illness gave the young woman the excuse to search for safety and distance from an abusive husband. Once there, she shuddered, went down on her knees and, convulsed with sobs, begged to be admitted, even if only overnight. "My husband will beat me again if I go home. I cannot go home. Please let me stay in the hospital."

Police and social workers can be afraid of "interfering" in cases of domestic violence lest they accidentally make a bad situation worse. Frequently the Church is a refuge, offering support in ways beyond the capabilities of statutory bodies. A listening ear, an open heart, an encouraging smile might be all

Feast of the week
Monday 27 September
St Vincent de Paul
(1581-1660)

"If you consider the poor in the light of faith, then you will observe that they are taking the place of the Son of God who chose to be poor.

Since Christ willed to be born poor, he chose for himself disciples who were poor. He made himself the servant of the poor and shared their poverty. He went so far as to say that he would consider every deed

which either helps or harms the poor as done for or against himself. Since God surely loves the poor, he also loves those who love the poor. For when one person holds another dear, he also includes in his affection anyone who loves or serves the one he loves. That is why we hope that God will love us for the sake of the poor. So when we visit the poor and needy, we try to understand the poor and weak. We sympathize with them so fully that we can echo Paul's words: I have become all things to all people."

From the writings of St Vincent de Paul

that is needed for someone to take the first step towards safety. A smile might make the difference between fear and courage, between abuse and freedom.

A parish filled with smiling and compassionate faces can offer help and hope. A smile can make the difference.

Katie Knight is a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

"What a beautiful truth of faith this is for our lives: the mercy of God! God's love for us is so great, so deep; it is an unfailing love, one which always takes us by the hand and supports us, lifts us up and leads us on."

Pope Francis

Today: Numbers 11:25-29 James 5:1-6 Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

Monday: Zechariah 8:1-8 Luke 9:46-50

Tuesday: Zechariah 8:20-23 Luke 9:51-56

Wednesday: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14 or Apocalypse 12:7-12 John 1:47-51

Thursday: Nehemiah 8:1-12 Luke 10:1-12

Friday: Baruch 1:15-22 Luke 10:13-16

Saturday: Exodus 23:20-23 Matthew 18:1-5, 10

Next Sunday: Genesis 2:18-24 Hebrews 2:9-11 Mark 10:2-16