

SUNDAY PLUS

Never alone

With us always

by Paul Higginson

Much of what we experience in life is fleeting – it comes and goes. Our childhood, our schooling, our working life, our health and even, of course, our looks! So many things are transient – including some of our relationships. Many people come in and out of our lives, some of them very dear to us. We may even find that God comes in and out of our life, in the sense that sometimes we might feel close to him and at other times very distant. We may go through periods when we stop believing altogether. Yet Jesus says: “Know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.” Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last. He has always been and always will be. Even when we stop believing in

him, he will never stop believing in us. God loves things by becoming them. God became human in Jesus and promises to be with us always, and love us, whoever we are, and whatever we have done.

The love of God and the presence of Jesus is not a transient, fleeting thing and it does not depend on our goodness or faithfulness. It is constant and lasts for ever. What we do with that unconditional love

is another matter. Jesus’ instruction to us in the Gospel today is to go out and spread the love we have been given “to all nations”. Not so easy perhaps, but make a start with those you meet today.

Having recently retired from teaching, Paul Higginson is a catechist at the Sacred Heart Church in Bushey.



Together in peace

by Christine Clark

Jane was at one of those crossroads times of life. The family needed to move for her husband’s new job, uprooting from everything that was familiar: house, schools, her job, friends and neighbours. Feeling anxious about what lay ahead, Jane wore a long face and a worried frown as she went to collect the children from school. As she waited at the school gates, a woman she had seen before but never spoken to approached her and pressed a small card into her hand. Jane looked at the card. It said, “Jesus said, ‘I am with you always.’” Jane read it and stuffed it into her bag, too embarrassed to do anything

but acknowledge it. As she walked home with the children, she thought about it. A voice came into her head from nowhere: “It’ll be all right. Don’t forget I’ll be there with you.” Things didn’t seem so daunting after all.

Christine Clark is a retired member of the editorial staff of Redemptorist Publications.

“We are united by the new commandment that Jesus left us, by the pursuit of the civilisation of love and by passion for the kingdom that the Lord calls us to build with him. We are united by the struggle for peace and justice.”

Pope Francis

Together in love

by James Gallogly

Thanks to the wonders of modern technology we have never been so well-connected. We have all become familiar with Zoom. We can FaceTime each other whenever we want from wherever we are. There are endless apps to meet each other (although some encounters can lead to sin). Why is loneliness such a curse then?

Sociologists and psychologists will have their opinions. Today’s readings certainly do. As children of God we are never alone.

In the prison system Listeners are trusted peers. They are Wing-based Samaritans who patiently hear the pain of their neighbours. There is no place for reticence.

Jesus is our Listener, welcoming

us, no matter how we present. With him this is not a stopgap triage, a brief intervention. This is the love of our Saviour. Like his startled disciples we need to embrace the message. He is with us, “yes, to the end of time.”

James Gallogly is a lay chaplain in a UK prison.

Blessed Trinity, teach us to be one with you. Be with us in all of life’s ups and downs, successes and failures, joys and sorrows. Amen.

Today:
Deuteronomy 4:32-34, 39-40
Romans 8:14-17
Matthew 28:16-20

Monday:
Zephaniah 3:14-18 or
Romans 12:9-16
Luke 1:39-56

Tuesday:
Tobit 2:9-14
Mark 12:13-17

Wednesday:
Tobit 3:1-11, 16-17
Mark 12:18-27

Thursday:
Tobit 6:10-11; 7:1, 9-14; 8:4-9
Mark 12:28-34

Friday:
Tobit 11:5-17
Mark 12:35-37

Saturday:
Tobit 12:1, 5-15, 20
Mark 12:38-44

Next Sunday:
Exodus 24:3-8
Hebrews 9:11-15
Mark 14:12-16, 22-26