

SUNDAY PLUS

Little matters

If money talks

By Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

In today's Gospel Jesus tells an unusual parable which appears to support dishonesty. A steward who manages his master's estates is accused of wasting his employer's goods; he is dismissed, but before he goes, he must submit his final account. This gives the steward time to plan his future. He is about to join the ranks of the unemployed and he wonders how he will survive. He doesn't waste much time looking at digging and begging as job-creation schemes. Instead, he calls in all those who owe his master and deals with them one by one. A smart operator, he knows the value of secrecy. He gives them an offer they can't refuse by reducing their debts; by the time he is finished,

several merchants owe him for his inventive arithmetic! Now, his job prospects look healthy; his future is looking good.

In a time of crisis, the steward takes firm and immediate action to ensure his own future. He is praised, not for his dishonesty, but for his resourcefulness in coping in an emergency with such speed.

Whenever God speaks to us, a reminder about the poor and the needy is never far away. Amos and Jesus both voice God's concern by reminders of social justice and personal responsibility. The worship of God must influence the way we behave; our dealings with each other indicate our worthiness of the kingdom. It's all tied together. If money talks, it should talk in the accent of the kingdom.

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




Little matters matter

By Lucy Russell

Life is all about the little things. It's the little things which give us most joy and which we love the most: birdsong, a hot drink, a piece of cake, a smile. It's also the little things which we can find most challenging. Annoying little things can drive us crazy, like wet towels being left on the bathroom floor. For most of us, it's a very good thing that it is the

little things that count. Few of us have the opportunity to do big things, but that doesn't mean we can't make an enormous difference. In the film *It's a Wonderful Life*, George Bailey made a difference just by doing kind things. Each one of us is necessary. Each of us makes an impact. As Desmond Tutu said, "Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."

Dr Lucy Russell is the author of *Who Do You Say You Are?*, available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk

Loving Lord, sometimes I'm tempted to look for the easy way out of complicated situations instead of facing them head-on. Please give me the courage I need when my heart sinks and I start searching for the nearest exit.  Amen.

We need to go forth, not close in on ourselves, in our little communities, in the parish, holding ourselves to be "righteous". This happens when there is a lack of the missionary zeal that leads us to encounter others. In Jesus' vision there are no sheep that are definitively lost, but only sheep that must be found again. We need to understand this well: to God no one is definitively lost. Never!

Pope Francis

Feast of the week
Wednesday 21 September
St Matthew



"Who? Me?" It's easy to imagine Matthew's shock when Jesus invited the tax collector to discipleship. At the time, he was engrossed in the only thing which mattered to him: money.

The taxman is never popular. We dislike forking out our hard-earned cash to a questionably honest middleman especially if, through "creative accounting", he lines his own pockets.

Matthew, a Roman employee, was unpopular and considered untrustworthy. Yet meeting Jesus transformed him. No longer enslaved by the cashbox, Matthew joined the Twelve, becoming a disciple, future martyr and the writer of one of the four Gospels on which we base our own lives. Interestingly, it was Judas, not the reformed taxman, who controlled the finances.

Matthew and, subsequently, Zacchaeus, showed that there's no need to stay in a rut. There's far more to life than the money-making daily grind. We can look to new and better horizons.

Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

Today:
Amos 8:4-7
1 Timothy 2:1-8
Luke 16:1-13

Monday:
Proverbs 3:27-34
Luke 8:16-18

Tuesday:
Proverbs 21:1-6, 10-13
Luke 8:19-21

Wednesday:
Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13
Matthew 9:9-13

Thursday:
Ecclesiastes 1:2-11
Luke 9:7-9

Friday:
Ecclesiastes 3:1-11
Luke 9:18-22

Saturday:
Ecclesiastes 11:9 - 12:8
Luke 9:43-45

Next Sunday:
Amos 6:1, 4-7
1 Timothy 6:11-16
Luke 16:19-31