

# SUNDAY PLUS

## The gift of peace

# Willing to learn?

By Fr Peter Morris C.Ss.R.

**D**ifficulties in domestic and community life often arise because we have stopped listening to each other. I have decided that I am right, they are wrong and that the only way forward is for others to get on board with me. If I am honest enough with myself and with those involved, underneath this unwillingness to budge is tremendous fear. Learning involves embracing something new and willingness to tread an unknown path.

I have recently discovered the thought of the Canadian clinical psychologist, Jordan Peterson. I understand that he is not perceived well in some circles; however, I think some of his thought is quite useful. Rule number nine in his

book, *Twelve Rules for Life*, is "Assume that the person you are listening to knows something you don't." This sounds to me like something you may find in the Book of Wisdom. Underneath this notion is the belief that learning is important to me and that other people can help me to grow in wisdom – even those I perceive as enemies.

In today's Gospel, Jesus promises his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will teach them everything they will need. The Holy Spirit can help us in this essential task of discipleship and can inspire in us this growth that is sore needed on our journey.

Am I truly open to learning from the people around me? Am I willing to listen intently? Am I resolved to continue to be a disciple, which literally means a perpetual learner?



Fr Peter Morris' book, *Christian Playfulness*, is available from Redemptorist Publications, [www.rpbooks.co.uk](http://www.rpbooks.co.uk).

## The gift of gentleness

No: it is not yours to open buds into blossoms.  
Shake the bud, strike it; it is beyond your power to make it blossom.  
Your touch soils it, you tear its petals to pieces and  
strew them in the dust.

But no colours appear, and no perfume.  
Ah! it is not for you to open the bud into a blossom.  
He who can open the bud does it so simply.  
He gives it a glance, and the life-sap stirs through its veins.  
At his breath the flower spreads its wings and flutters in the wind.  
Colours flush out like heart-longings,  
the perfume betrays a sweet secret.

He who can open the bud does it so simply.

Fruit Gathering, XVIII, Rabindranath Tagore

**"We look to the Lord, who suffered so upon the cross, but he never lost his peace. Peace, this peace, is not our own: it is not sold, and we do not buy it. It is a gift of God for which we must beg.**

Pope Francis

Feast of the week  
Friday 27 May

## St Augustine of Canterbury (d. 604)

St Augustine landed in Anglo-Saxon Britain after Pope Gregory the Great met some slaves on sale in the market in Rome. The experience catalysed his sending of Augustine to people who were "not Angles but angels!"

The Romans brought Christianity to Britain. Saint Alban, the first-recorded British Christian martyr, died in 305, 590 years before Augustine landed on Kentish shores. The Glastonbury legend says that Joseph of Arimathea set up the first British Christian

community at Glastonbury. After the departure of the Romans, small pockets of Christianity survived until Augustine's arrival, although there is little evidence that Romano-British Christians tried to bring the Anglo-Saxons into the fold.

After Kent's King Ethelbert became a Christian, Augustine reported that 10,000 of his subjects followed the king.

During his eight years as the first Archbishop of Canterbury, Augustine's limited understanding of the culture, traditions and thinking of the people he had come to evangelise possibly explains his limited effectiveness in Wales and other parts of England.

God of peace, teach me to be a peacemaker. Help me to bring your gift of healing to the people around me. May I act with tenderness and compassion towards others and may I be gentle with myself.  Amen.

Today:  
Acts 15:1-2, 22-29  
Apocalypse  
21:10-14, 22-23  
John 14:23-29

Monday:  
Acts 16:11-15  
John 15:26-16:4

Tuesday:  
Acts 16:22-34  
John 16:5-11

Wednesday:  
Acts 17:15, 22-18:1  
John 16:12-15

Thursday:  
Acts 1:1-11  
Ephesians 1:17-23  
or Hebrews  
9:24-28; 10:19-23  
Luke 24:46-53

(I) Acts 18:1-8  
John 16:16-20

Friday:  
Acts 18:9-18  
John 16:20-23

(E) St Augustine of  
Canterbury (Feast):  
1 Thessalonians 2:2-8  
Luke 10:1-9

Saturday:  
Acts 18:23-28  
John 16:23-28

Next Sunday:  
Acts 7:55-60  
Apocalypse  
22:12-14, 16-17, 20  
John 17:20-26