

SUNDAY PLUS

Home for every heart

An eternal home

By Sr Janet Fearn
FMDM

The house is old, the trees are bare,
Moonless above bends twilight's dome;
But what on earth is half so dear—
So longed for—as the hearth of home?

Emily Brönte said something that we can all recognise. We need a place to be ourselves, where appearances don't matter and we can indulge in a few minutes of peace and quiet, briefly forgetting responsibilities and the "to do" list. There's a difference between a "house" and a "home".

Were there moments when Jesus wanted to escape to a place of his own? Having been ejected from Nazareth, he made Capernaum his base and visited his friends Martha, Mary and Lazarus in Bethany. He was "at home" but the house wasn't his. Might he have occasionally liked to shut the front door and make the world go away, even for a couple of hours?

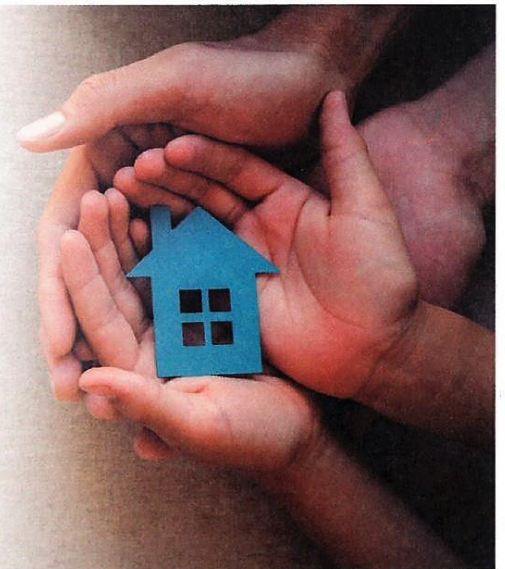
Today, many celebrities appear to live in a sort-of enclave, patrolled by security guards,


surrounded by high walls and fences, trapped in their homes for fear of being recognised by autograph hunters and hangers-on. Even their accounts at the local supermarket are anonymous!

By contrast, apart from times of solitary prayer, Jesus was available to others, known and unknown, at every hour of the day and night. Even when he suggested to his overworked disciples that they could go away and rest awhile, the crowds guessed their proposed destination and arrived in advance. Rather than the lifestyle of the rich and famous, Jesus promised his followers hard work, tiredness, inconvenience – and an eternal home.

"Wherever I may wander,
Wherever I may roam,
As long as you're beside me,
Then anywhere is home."

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



Loving Lord, be with all the homeless people in our world. Ease their worries and give them opportunities for a better life. Let them find dignity, hope and wisdom in the seemingly hopeless, senseless situations of their everyday. Let them know your love.  Amen.

"House" and "home"

By Michael George

What is the difference between a house and a home? This is a question that children are often asked to reflect on when learning about relationships. A house is simply a structure; a home is defined by the relationships that are lived out within that structure. Describing a "house", children are likely to talk about four walls, a front door, roof and chimney. Describing a "home", they are more likely to use

abstract nouns: a place of love, warmth, comfort, safety and enjoyment, encouragement, celebration and consolation – a place where the heart tells people that they belong.

Jesus called others to follow him, leaving behind their houses. Being "house-less" did not mean being "home-less", since they were encouraged to make their home in him and find, in him, all those same qualities children use to describe a home. We are the same – called to make our home in Jesus.

Michael George has served Catholic primary schools as a teacher and headteacher for more than twenty years.

Feast of the week
Wednesday 29 June

Ss Peter and Paul, Apostles

Memories can be painful. St Peter would never forget denying Jesus three times nor hiding so that he would not suffer the same fate. True or not, tradition says that Peter's face, in later years, was furrowed by his tears of remorse.

St Paul, in his zeal for the Jewish Law, caused many deaths. These included Stephen, whose stoning Saul, as he was then, witnessed

and held the cloaks of the men who killed the deacon. How many names and faces did Paul remember to his dying day?

How often did both Peter and Paul lie awake at night, knowing that they had been forgiven, but wishing that they might have done things differently? How often did their regrets and memories urge them on to make amends to the very best of their ability?

We've all "been there, done that". We've all got something in common with these two great saints – perhaps also great holiness?

"Those most vulnerable, the invisible, those without an abode run the risk of paying the highest price. I would therefore like to acknowledge the world of street newspapers, and especially their vendors, who are largely homeless, terribly marginalised and unemployed: thousands of people across the world who live and have a job thanks to selling these extraordinary newspapers."

Pope Francis

Today:
1 Kings 19:16, 19-21
Galatians 5:1, 13-18
Luke 9:51-62

Monday:
Amos 2:6-10, 13-16
Matthew 8:18-22

Tuesday:
Amos 3:1-8; 4:11-12
Matthew 8:23-27

Wednesday:
Acts 12:1-11
2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18
Matthew 16:13-19

Thursday:
Amos 7:10-17
Matthew 9:1-8

Friday:
Amos 8:4-6, 9-12
Matthew 9:9-13

Saturday:
Amos 9:11-15
Matthew 9:14-17

Next Sunday:
Isaiah 66:10-14
Galatians 6:14-18
Luke 10:1-12, 17-20