

SUNDAY PLUS

Celebrate the Word



Called

take his place. Paul confronts the dissension in the Christian community at Corinth because they are making lesser lights into the great light. The Church is divided into factions – not over doctrinal differences but over personalities. Some are following Apollos, an eloquent and enthusiastic teacher who attracts the well-educated to Christianity. Some, mainly Jewish Christians, rally to the name of Peter. Some stay loyal to the memory of Paul, preferring his passion and bluntness.

Paul resists any attempt to make Christian discipleship a matter of following this or that Christian leader. For Paul, only one person gets the incense and that person is Jesus himself. Religious leadership is about leading others to Christ: it cannot be reduced to smiles and styles. Religious authority does not lead others to itself but to the Lord. It does not exult in itself or point to itself. It points to Christ. For Paul and Matthew there is only one answer to the question “Who are you for?” The Christian must answer, “I am for Christ.”


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

By Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

In Matthew's account of the call of the first four disciples, the evangelist keeps the focus on Jesus and shows the authority of his word and the power of his healing. Discipleship is centred on Jesus.

Because of *who* he is, others will change. Jesus alone is the source of discipleship. Without the person of Jesus, discipleship is meaningless.

Like Matthew, in today's second reading Paul is insistent on Jesus as the focus of Christian discipleship. Jesus is the great light and no one, however exalted, can

God of surprises, please help me to see you in all life's unexpected happenings so that I can see that you never leave any of us alone and unsupported.  Amen.

Love in action

By Rachel Thompson

A favourite interview question for one school where I worked was, “Who was your favourite teacher and why?” While designed to put the interviewee at ease, it also demonstrates the truth that it's people, not necessarily ideas, which inspire us. Sometimes we invite speakers into school who have experienced Damascene conversions. Although they can impress, it is the unsung people who demonstrate committed love who really change

pupils' lives. Christianity is not primarily an idea or philosophy, but a relationship with Jesus. Jesus inspires his disciples to follow through personal encounter. In teaching it is particularly (and scarily!) true that, “the medium is the message” - and I can't teach what I don't know. Jesus is, quite literally, love in action. In putting love into action in a practical way, I meet Jesus. If I am to be a disciple, I must make the time to respond to the call to meet Jesus in prayer too.

Rachel Thompson combines being a full-time secondary school teacher with being the Children's Editor for Redemptorist Publications.

Feast of the week
Saturday 28 January

St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

Come, Holy Spirit, Divine Creator, the true source of light and fountain of wisdom. Pour forth your brilliance upon my intellect, scatter the darkness which covers me, that of sin and of ignorance. Grant me a penetrating mind to understand, a retentive memory, method and ease in learning, the clearness to understand, and abundant grace in expressing myself. Guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress, and bring it to successful completion. This I ask through Jesus Christ, true God and true man, living and reigning with you and the Father, forever and ever. Amen.

St Thomas Aquinas

Anyone who is a man or a woman of hope – the great hope which faith gives us – knows that even in the midst of difficulties God acts and he surprises us... God always saves the best for us. But he asks us to let ourselves be surprised by his love, to accept his surprises. Let us trust God!

Pope Francis

Today:
Isaiah 8:23 – 9:3
1 Corinthians 1:10-13. 17
Matthew 4:12-23

Monday:
Hebrews 9:15. 24-28
Mark 3:22-30

Tuesday:
Hebrews 10:1-10
Mark 3:31-35

Wednesday:
Acts 22:3-16 or
Acts 9:1-22
Mark 16:15-18

Thursday:
2 Timothy 1:1-8 or
Titus 1:1-5
Luke 10:1-9

Friday:
Hebrews 10:32-39
Mark 4:26-34

Saturday:
Hebrews 11:1-2. 8-19
Mark 4:35-41

Next Sunday:
Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13
1 Corinthians 1:26-31
Matthew 5:1-12