

SUNDAY PLUS

Chosen for fruitfulness

God's love is first

By Fr Denis McBride
C.Ss.R

When John talks about the love of God in today's readings, he is clear what he means – "this is the love I mean: not our love for God, but God's love for us". The same message is underlined in the Gospel: "You did not choose me, no, I chose you." We don't have to turn up at an interview to discover if God will choose us or not: God has already made an everlasting decision to love us. God's love is not an issue; it is not a matter of speculation. It is a constant.

God's love is first, and it is only because of the primacy of such love that we have the power and

the freedom to choose God. God, who has opted for us, declared his choice and taken us on. It is a decisive movement of love that began with the Father: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love." The hope is expressed that we can come to appreciate God's choice of us. It is such good news that John is anxious to get the message through to us, simply and clearly. Can we remain in the love that chooses us?

God's love is based on choice: God loves because he chooses to love. The supreme example of that is in his Word, Jesus. If the supreme act of love is to lay down your life for the

sake of others, Jesus shows that he could have no greater love.

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



Remains of St John's house, Ephesus. Photo: Sr Janet Fearnis

Make a lasting difference

By Ellen Teague

Jimmy Mizen was killed in an unprovoked attack in his local High Street in South London a day after his sixteenth birthday in 2008. Last May, on the fifteenth anniversary of his death, his mother remembered the thoughtfulness of friends and neighbours who brought consolation in a practical way. "We will never forget the kindness of so many after we lost Jimmy," said Margaret Mizen. "The amount of people that brought food round to our home, so that we had enough to feed all those gathered in our house and garden."

She also thanked people, "for the love and kindness you have shown us over these years." By supporting Mizen Foundation events and nonviolence projects, Margaret said, they have helped to create "a living legacy of forgiveness, peace and hope."

<http://mizenfoundation.org/>

How can we support others through small gestures?

Ellen Teague, a regular writer for Redemptorist Publications, writes and campaigns on justice, peace and ecology issues on behalf of the Columban Missionary Society for whom she edits their newsletter, Vocation for Justice.

Every activity — work and rest, family and social life, exercising political, cultural and economic responsibilities — every activity, whether small or great, if lived in union with Jesus and with the attitude of love and of service, is an occasion to live baptism and Gospel holiness to the fullest.

Pope Francis

Feast of the week
Thursday 9 May


The Ascension of the Lord

(c. 1498–1537)

We live in a fast-paced world. Cars are getting faster, Amazon deliveries are getting quicker, internet speeds increase... we rush from one place to the next. Nothing new there, we are frequently reminded of this and are well aware of it. If we have to wait for something or someone, we get impatient. Waiting goes against the 21st-century grain: it is seen as something negative.

On this Feast of the Ascension, Jesus tells us that waiting can be a really good thing. Jesus tells his disciples that a time of waiting was necessary before their time of mission. Just before ascending into heaven, he tells them "Stay in the city then, until you are clothed with the power from on high". The Lord's work for sure is urgent, there is no time to waste. Yet Jesus is instructing them to wait until the time is right to start their mission. He asks them to adjust and work according to the Lord's time, rather than their own. Soon, yes, they would start their mission, but not just yet.

Patrick Van der Vorst

Jesus, Lord, you know that I love you.
Help me to put that love into action.
May your love spread through me to others.
Lord, you are everywhere: be everywhere I go.  Amen.

Today:
Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48
1 John 4:7-10
John 15:9-17

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 4:1-13
Mark 16:15-20

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

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

Next Sunday:
Acts 1:15-17, 20-26
1 John 4:11-16
John 17:11-19