

SUNDAY PLUS

Celebrate littleness

Beginning together

By Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

Every great religion has sacred stories which account for the beginning of creation and humanity. The book of Genesis has two stories of creation, the second of which we hear in today's first reading. God fashions a man of dust from the soil and then breathes into his nostrils a breath of life. God's breath is man's life. When God plants a garden in the midst of the wasteland, this garden becomes man's first address.

The man that God creates is humanity; he embodies in his person the whole of humanity. He is not one human being among many: he is *the Human*. To relieve man's aloneness, God begins work at creating a helper. Then there is the striking and comical image of God creating all the beasts and the

birds which he brings to man to see if he will name any of them "helper". There is a long procession of candidates for the post: man gives names to them all, but none is named helper. After the interviews, man is still alone. Clearly, God has to think again.

So, the Lord takes something from the man. What is taken is enclosed in flesh to become a new creature, a woman. When God brings the woman to the man, this time there is success as the man exclaims, "At last..." In marriage the two separate human beings become one body. Only marriage captures the original completion of the total human in one body.

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

Today let us ask the Virgin Mary for a huge grace, that of littleness: to be children who trust the Father, certain that he will not fail to take care of us.

Pope Francis

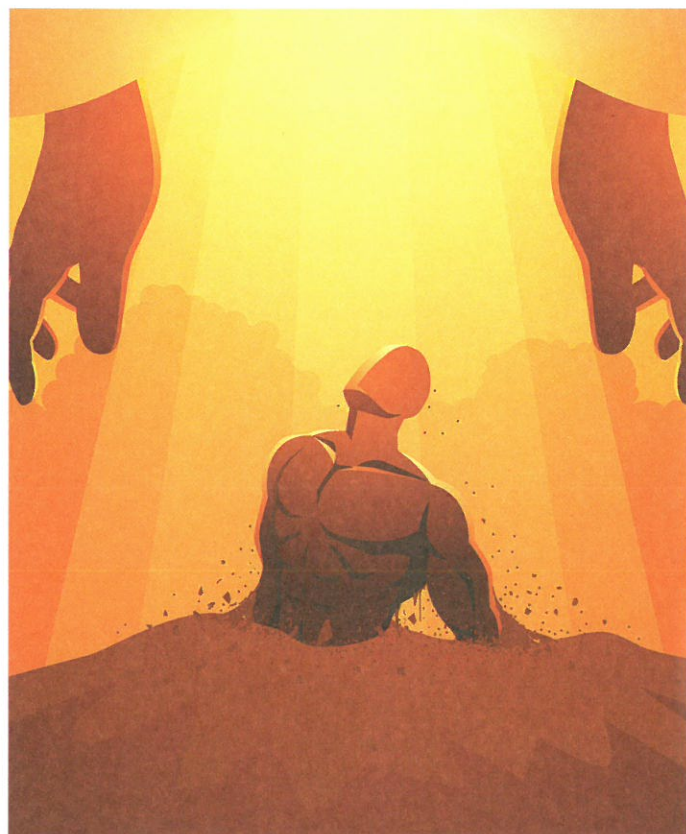
Childhood innocence

By Krista Nelson

I'm so lucky. I get to co-lead Children's Liturgy every week. Yes, I miss my priest's homily, but I get to learn from children instead. I'm supposed to instruct them – but it often feels the other way around. Hearing their interpretations of the Gospels and how they can live out Jesus' teachings is to see firsthand what receiving "the

Kingdom of God like a child" looks like. Maybe it's because they're still so aware of what it looks and feels like to have doting parents and feel safe in their care that imagining God's love for them is so easy. We ask them how they can be Jesus' hands and feet on earth, and they don't hesitate before giving us excellent examples: "Help find someone's lunch box," "Unload the dishwasher," "Play with someone lonely," and on and on. They instinctively understand, as Mother Teresa said, doing "small things with great love."

Krista Nelson is a mum of four, catechist and editor.



Feast of the week
Friday 11 October

Pope St John XXIII
(1881-1963)

Pope John XXIII surprised those who expected him to be a caretaker pope by calling the historic Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the first session opening on 11 October 1962. His passionate views on equality were summed up in his famous statement, "We were all made in God's image, and thus, we are all Godly alike."

The Catholic Church celebrates his feast day, not on the date of his death (3 June), as is usual, nor his birth, or even on the day of his papal coronation (as is the case with several canonised popes, such as John Paul II) but on 11 October – the day of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. This is understandable, since the Council was his idea and it was he who convened it.

Lord of life and hope, watch over, bless and protect all children everywhere, whether young, middle-aged or old. ✚ Amen.

Today:
Genesis 2:18-24
Hebrews 2:9-11
Mark 10:2-16

Monday:
Galatians 1:6-12
Luke 10:25-37

Tuesday:
Galatians 1:13-24
Luke 10:38-42

Wednesday:
Galatians 2:1-2, 7-14
Luke 11:1-4

Thursday:
Galatians 3:1-5
Luke 11:5-13

Friday:
Galatians 3:7-14
Luke 11:15-26

Saturday:
Galatians 3:22-29
Luke 11:27-28

Next Sunday:
Wisdom 7:7-11
Hebrews 4:12-13
Mark 10:17-30