

SUNDAY PLUS

Search for Jesus

Even when Jesus is hard to find...

By Mary Bell

We have been taught that Jesus is in everybody: we must look for him. But we ask ourselves where Jesus is in the tyrant, the bully, where Jesus is in the depraved, the greedy, the sadist. He can be found everywhere but where is Jesus in wartime when people are bombed and massacred? Where is he in time of plague or famine, when people are dying through lack of food or water? Where is Jesus in the earthquake or volcanic eruption? Where is Jesus when our loved ones are suffering pain; when they are dying and our prayers for their recovery are not successful?

The answer is that he is always there in our time of trouble. He has told us, "Come to me all you that labour and are


burdened and I will give you rest." We have only to reach out and speak to him.

If the answer is not what we are expecting we must accept that the ways of the Lord are not ours.

As for seeing Jesus in our enemies, we have to remember that he told us to love them. The power of his love is immense, we must engage with it and harness it to ours.

Sometimes we must go away like he did, to recharge our batteries, to gain perspective on our lives, to pray and meditate quietly. Other people can be distracting. In Jesus alone can we gain strength to cope with whatever life throws at us.

Following many years in the classroom, retired teacher and Head of RE, Mary Bell now has time to enjoy the beauties of the natural world.

Loving Lord, be with all those who are sick, their carers and those who worry about them. Give healing, strength and comfort where they are needed. Stay especially close to those who are about to come home to you and give them eternal life.  Amen.

The World Day of the Sick

The World Day of the Sick was established by Pope John Paul II in 1992, in response to his own experiences of illness and the compassionate care he received. The event is celebrated annually on 11 February, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, and has become a time for reflection, prayer and action on behalf of those who are suffering from illness of any description and diagnosis.

The World Day of the Sick is an opportunity for people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds to come together in support of those who are sick and their caregivers, as well as to raise awareness about the importance of healthcare and well-being for all people. It reminds us that everybody, regardless of their condition, deserves dignity, respect and access to quality healthcare. It offers an incentive to working towards improving the quality of life for those who are sick and for their families.

Based on an article by Mahima Chaudhary

Today:
Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46
1 Corinthians 10:31 – 11:1
Mark 1:40-45

Monday:
James 1:1-11
Mark 8:11-13

Tuesday:
James 1:12-18
Mark 8:14-21

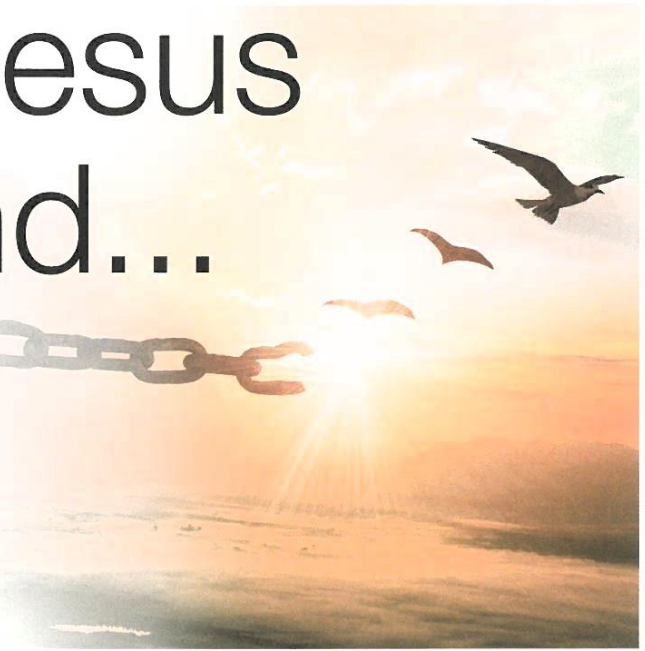
Wednesday:
Joel 2:12-18
2 Corinthians 5:20 – 6:2
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday:
Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Luke 9:22-25

Friday:
Isaiah 58:1-9
Matthew 9:14-15

Saturday:
Isaiah 58:9-14
Luke 5:27-32

Next Sunday:
Genesis 9:8-15
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:12-15



Feast of the week
Sunday 11 February

Our Lady of Lourdes

Coming to Lourdes means... looking at and discovering this place where the Virgin Mary appeared eighteen times in 1858. It means feeling the faith of the thousands of pilgrims who respond to Our Lady's call to "come here in procession" and observing the hope of all the sick pilgrims who come to the Grotto for a little comfort and – why not – the grace of healing. Seeing the charity of all those, volunteers and hospitaliers, who come to serve others, means experiencing the Message of Lourdes in practice.

At Lourdes, the poor and the sick come first.

In a society marked by individualism, Lourdes wants to respond with fraternity. To material success, Lourdes wants to respond with the price and value of poverty. To the cult of the body, Lourdes wants to respond with the dignity of all life. To mistrust, Lourdes responds with trust. To isolation and loneliness, Lourdes responds with gathering and joy.

The official website of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, <https://www.lourdes-france.org/en>

Things have a price and can be for sale. But people have a dignity that is priceless and worth far more than things.

Pope Francis