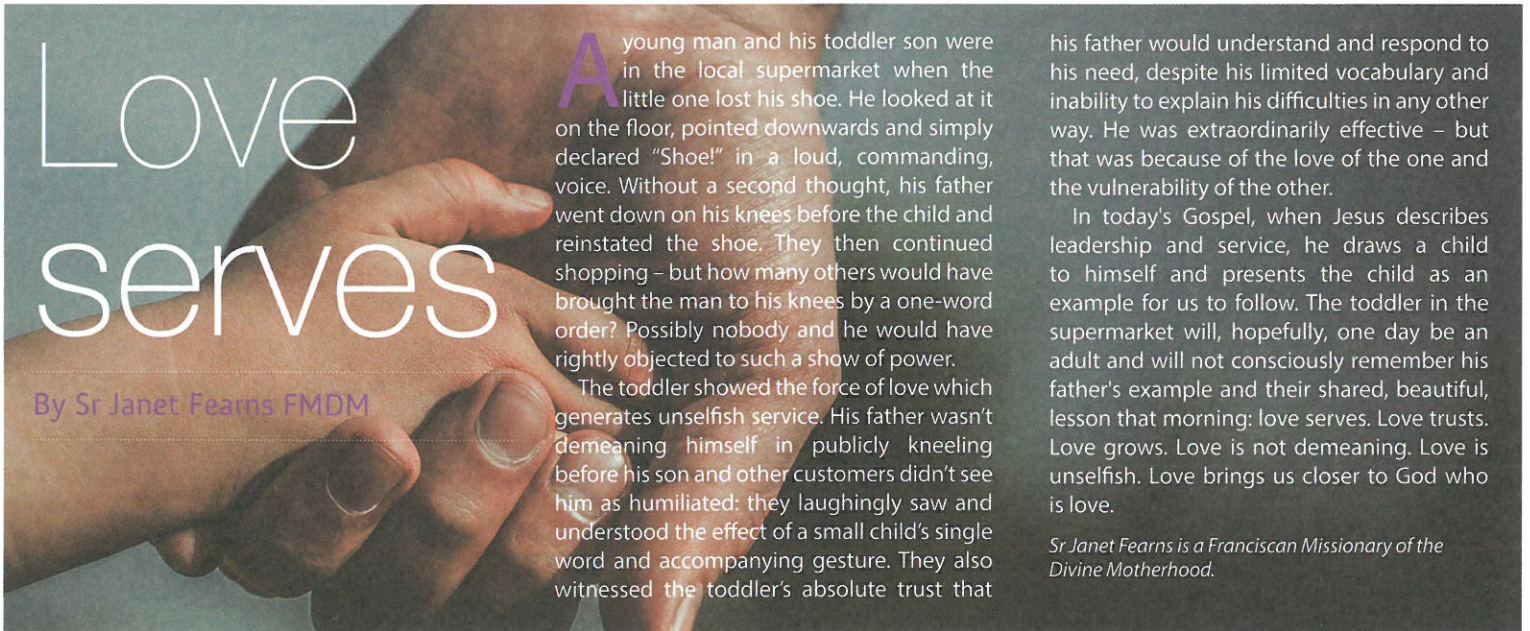


SUNDAY PLUS

The power of service



Love serves

By Sr Janet Fearnis FMDM

A young man and his toddler son were in the local supermarket when the little one lost his shoe. He looked at it on the floor, pointed downwards and simply declared “Shoe!” in a loud, commanding, voice. Without a second thought, his father went down on his knees before the child and reinstated the shoe. They then continued shopping – but how many others would have brought the man to his knees by a one-word order? Possibly nobody and he would have rightly objected to such a show of power.

The toddler showed the force of love which generates unselfish service. His father wasn’t demeaning himself in publicly kneeling before his son and other customers didn’t see him as humiliated: they laughingly saw and understood the effect of a small child’s single word and accompanying gesture. They also witnessed the toddler’s absolute trust that

his father would understand and respond to his need, despite his limited vocabulary and inability to explain his difficulties in any other way. He was extraordinarily effective – but that was because of the love of the one and the vulnerability of the other.

In today’s Gospel, when Jesus describes leadership and service, he draws a child to himself and presents the child as an example for us to follow. The toddler in the supermarket will, hopefully, one day be an adult and will not consciously remember his father’s example and their shared, beautiful, lesson that morning: love serves. Love trusts. Love grows. Love is not demeaning. Love is unselfish. Love brings us closer to God who is love.

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

As we look at [Mary], in glory, we understand that the true power is service – let us not forget this: the true power is service – and to reign means to love. And that this is the road to Heaven.

Pope Francis

To serve and not to be served

By Camilla Harrison


Mother Teresa was asked, “How do we bring about world peace?” She replied, “Go home and love your family”. She also taught that love cannot remain by itself. It must be put into the action of service.

She served “the poorest of the poor”, those who had been abandoned by family and society. On being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, she refused to take part in the banquet,

uncomfortable to feast while others starved. She donated her prize money to India’s poor people.

Mother Teresa followed closely the teachings of Jesus who came to serve and not to be served, washing his disciples’ feet to show this love. She understood that a lack of family love, and the missing service of parents, can cause chasms of need in society. She said that the worst human disease is to be unloved. If love and service begin in the family, they can ripple outwards into the wider world.

Camilla Harrison was the head of an RE department at a comprehensive school for twenty years and the writer of two of the Family Walks series of books.

Lord God, it’s not easy to be in a position of service and yet that is the sort of leadership that you taught us. Help me to strike the balance.  Amen.



Feast of the week
Thursday 26 September
Pope St Paul VI
(1897-1978)

One morning in 2006, as I travelled to work at Vatican Radio, a lady sat beside me and seeing that I am a Sister, proceeded to give me – in Italian – her entire medical history. Unexpectedly, I realised that she had begun a unique and unforgettable testimony.

One day, as she walked through the famous Piazza Venezia, she unexpectedly started to haemorrhage. A priest saw her and stayed with her until the ambulance arrived. Later, he rang the hospital ward to ask after her wellbeing and to enquire whether she needed anything that he could get or do for her. They managed to hold a brief conversation.

To the lady’s amazement, a few days later, that priest was declared Pope Paul VI! He had been on his way to the Conclave when he stopped to help her.

Sr Janet Fearnis FMDM



Your New Sunday Missal is available from Redemptorist Publications Visit www.rpbooks.co.uk Code: 1979 ISBN: 9780852316436 Price: £19.95

Today: Wisdom 2:12. 17-20 James 3:16 – 4:3 Mark 9:30-37	Monday: Proverbs 3:27-34 Luke 8:16-18	Tuesday: Proverbs 21:1-6. 10-13 Luke 8:19-21	Wednesday: Proverbs 30:5-9 Luke 9:1-6	Thursday: Ecclesiastes 1:2-11 Luke 9:7-9	Friday: Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 Luke 9:18-22	Saturday: Ecclesiastes 11:9 – 12:8 Luke 9:43-45	Next Sunday: Numbers 11:25-29 James 5:1-6 Mark 9:38-43. 45. 47-48
--	---	--	---	--	--	---	--