

SUNDAY PLUS

Searching for hope

The promise of comedy

By Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

The best commentary on Jesus' Sermon on the Plain that we hear in today's Gospel is Jesus' own life. Jesus did not live his life as if he was blessed by God; he lived out his life in the constant awareness that God did indeed bless him. In the course of that life he experienced poverty: not only the poverty of deprivation, but the poverty of standing alone against the crowds. He experienced hunger: not just the hunger that can be answered by bread, but the hunger that can be satisfied only by doing what is right. He had reason to weep and mourn, not only at the loss of a dear friend but at the lost opportunities of his own people. He was no stranger to being held up as a clown for the amusement of all; he knew the experience of rejection, betrayal and abandonment.

The Beatitudes are not prescriptions for becoming poor or hungry or mournful or afflicted. The promise is that God handles all these things, lifting his people out of them. That is the Good News. God is not committed to keeping his people at the level of being hurt and wounded – if that were true the Beatitude would read, "Blessed are you who weep, for you shall weep even more." The vision of the God of the Beatitudes is the vision of a generous God, one who reverses the tragedy. "Blessed are you who weep" is the tragedy; "for you shall laugh" is the comedy. And it is the comedy, not the tragedy, which is the promise.

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

Remember
God's
Promises



Jubilee 2025

16-18 February: Jubilee of Artists

We can speak of artistic creation in terms of three "movements". A first movement has to do with the senses, which are struck with wonder and amazement. This initial, outer movement then leads to others, more profound.

A second movement touches the depths of our heart and soul. A composition of colours, words or sounds has the power to evoke within us memories, images and emotions...

Yet artistic creation does not stop here. There is a third movement, in which the perception and contemplation

of beauty generates a sense of hope that can light up our world. The outer and inner movements merge and in turn affect our way of relating to those all around us. They generate empathy, the ability to understand others, with whom we have so much in common. We sense a bond with them, a bond no longer vague, but real and shared...

Dear artists, in a special way you are "guardians of beauty in our world"... Today, as always, we celebrate that beauty with hearts full of hope.

Pope Francis

Left out?

By Linda Jones

It feels bad to be left on the sidelines. When the team gets picked, there is always someone who is first choice and someone who is left until last. But it's not just in sport that people are left out. Sometimes, because of poverty, you get left behind. It feels terrible if you can't afford to buy decent food for your children. Or maybe you are someone who is left out because you are discriminated against - facing daily racism and prejudice. Jesus calls us all to work to include people, not to exclude them. We are to build communities of hope where no one is left out. On Racial Justice Sunday the Church reminds us that racism is a sin. All of us have dignity because we are made in the image and likeness of God. All of us are welcome. All of us are loved.

Linda Jones is Head of the CAFOD Theology Programme and a regular contributor to Redemptorist Publications.

Lord of hope, give your hope to those who are searching for it. Be their light in the darkness and a reason for joy. ☩ Amen.

Human dignity is the same for all human beings: when I trample on the dignity of another, I am trampling on my own.

Pope Francis

Today: Jeremiah 17:5-8 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 Luke 6:17, 20-26	Monday: Genesis 4:1-15, 25 Mark 8:11-13	Tuesday: Genesis 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10 Mark 8:14-21	Wednesday: Genesis 8:6-13, 20-22 Mark 8:22-26	Thursday: Genesis 9:1-13 Mark 8:27-33	Friday: Genesis 11:1-9 Mark 8:34 - 9:1	Saturday: 1 Peter 5:1-4 Matthew 16:13-19	Next Sunday: 1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23 1 Corinthians 15:45-49 Luke 6:27-38
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