

SUNDAY PLUS

Look around you

The child as our teacher

by Fr Denis McBride
C.Ss.R.

In today's Gospel Jesus takes a little child, sets him in front of his disciples and challenges his disciples to accept the little one. When they can welcome that little child, they can welcome the real Jesus. Jesus compares himself to the little child, the one who cannot resort to power tactics when threatened or maltreated. Jesus' protection is his Father; his trust is placed in the God who will ensure

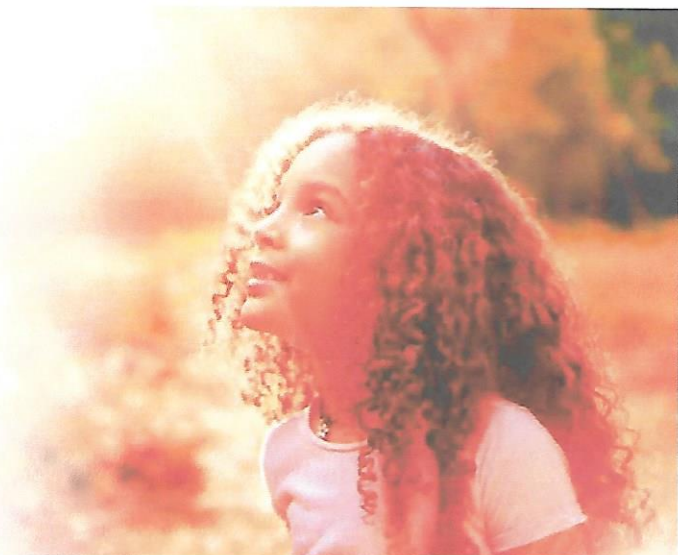
his protection. When suffering comes, Jesus refuses to abandon trust in the Father. That trust makes him vulnerable, like a little child, but unless the disciples can come to welcome that vulnerability, they will never understand the way of Jesus.

Jesus offers a permanent challenge to his followers to welcome the powerless, to take to heart the weakest members of the community. He places himself in their company. Special hospitality should be offered to those from whom we can benefit the least. Their vulnerability is something that Jesus not only shares but values.

As he takes the road to Jerusalem, his own vulnerability will expose him to those who lie in wait. There will be people keen to explore his gentleness and put his endurance to the test. In drawing his own followers away from looking to power and prestige for models of discipleship, Jesus invites them to a new openness to the Father. No

earthly power will save Jesus from death in Jerusalem; only his Father can save him from being left for dead. That is what the Father does. That is how the Father welcomes the trust of the little one.

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



Lord, watch over, protect and bless my family in good times and in bad, in their joys and sorrows, ups and downs, successes and failures, laughter and tears. Let us love each other more with every second that passes. 🙏 Amen.

Mission in the home

by Lucy Russell

"Get off me!" James (14) and Edgar (12) have never come to blows, but it was getting close. "What are you arguing about? Go!" I shouted at one, "and sit in the kitchen. And you, go and sit in the front room. Now!" They did. And sobbed. I stood in the hallway and took a deep breath. "What is this about?" I asked. "I haven't got any socks, he's taken all of them, he always takes my socks, and don't tell me off for hurting him, I didn't hurt him. Why would I hurt him? I love him!"

There can be arguments and rivalries about the smallest of things, although often it is the smallest things

Feast of the week
Thursday 23 September
St Pio of Pietrelcina
(1887-1968)

"I consider what writers say about the kingfishers, little birds who build their nests on the beach near the sea. They build it in a circular form and so tightly compressed that the sea water cannot penetrate it . . . Here these graceful little birds place their young ones, so that when

the sea comes upon them by surprise, they can swim with confidence and float on the waves . . . I want your heart to be like this – well-compact and closed on all sides, so that if the worries and storms of the world, the evil spirit and the flesh come upon it, it will not be penetrated. Leave but one opening to your heart that is toward heaven . . . How I love and am enraptured by those little birds!"

From the writings of St Pio of
Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)

that mean the most. But in the end there is love. And that is what truly matters. Once all was calm, I went to the shops and bought ten pairs of black socks.

Dr Lucy Russell is the author of *Who Do You Say You Are?*, available from Redemptorist Publications, www.rpbooks.co.uk

"May we always care for our children, not counting the cost, so that they may never believe themselves to be mistakes, but always know their infinite worth. Let us ask the Lord for this grace: that our hearts become free and filled with light, so that we can rejoice as children of God."

Pope Francis

Today:
Wisdom 2:12, 17-20
James 3:16 – 4:3
Mark 9:30-37

Monday:
Ezra 1:1-6
Luke 8:16-18

Tuesday:
Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13
Matthew 9:9-13

Wednesday:
Ezra 9:5-9
Luke 9:1-6

Thursday:
Haggai 1:1-8
Luke 9:7-9

Friday:
Haggai 1:15 – 2:9
Luke 9:18-22

Saturday:
Zechariah 2:5-9, 14-15
Luke 9:43-45

Next Sunday:
Numbers 11:25-29
James 5:1-6
Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48