

SUNDAY PLUS

God is love

Good company

By Brian Fahy

His name was Wilson. He was a volleyball, washed up on a deserted island. His face was burnt red, painted in blood from the cut hand of Tom Hanks, in the film *Castaway*. He didn't say very much, but he listened a lot. For four years he was companion to the castaway, a kindly and sympathetic presence that helped Hanks to cope with the isolation and the loneliness of living on that uninhabited island. He drifted away shortly before Hanks was rescued and later a replacement volleyball was bought to remind Hanks of his faithful companion and friend.


We are not meant to be alone. It is not our nature. We are meant to live in

loving relationships with others. In the image of God we have been created and God's image, we discover, is a community of three: Father, Son and Spirit. God was never alone. God is a community of three. Finding himself alone, Hanks needed someone to talk to, someone with whom to share his feelings, his fears and his hopes. Wilson helped save his life.

In the saving of our lives, from fear and hopelessness and sorrow, God gave his own son and that son shed his blood for love of us. In doing so he taught us the way of love. Simple, generous love will save us: love that can be seen in the blood on Wilson's face. It's love that we find on the bloodied face of Christ Jesus, who died for love of us.



Brian Fahy describes himself as an "apprentice poet". His website is to be found at www.errispoetry.com

My Lord and my God, I love you and adore you.
Fill me with your love and let me radiate it to
the people around me.  Amen.

Shout from the rooftops

By Natasha Pritchard

As a teenager, my favourite song was an upbeat dance song called "True Love Never Dies". Singing about finding someone who truly loves her, the singer claims "I want to tell the world about it... get up on the rooftops and shout it". Who would have thought that a secular song, written to get young people up on the dance floor in 2003, could describe so perfectly how a Christian might feel about God?

Out of all of the words of scripture, a church on my commute has etched into the stone above the door, the words "God is love". I often wonder how many people have sat in traffic along that busy route and felt inspired by those words. If we want to introduce people to our God, surely this is the most important and powerful starting point. Once we fully accept that God loves us with an infinite, everlasting, true love, why wouldn't we want to shout that from the rooftops?

Natasha Pritchard has worked in Catholic hospital chaplaincy and youth ministry, and is now Area Support Chaplain at Methodist Homes.

Feast of the week
Friday 9 June

St Ephraem
of Syria
(306-373)

"The devil shouldn't have the best tunes," said William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army. Good music attracts people. St Ephraem also believed that Christians should have the best words. He was a deacon who spent forty years leading worshippers in praise

of God and preaching outstanding sermons. Seeing heretics spreading their doctrines in song, he wrote new hymns and shrewdly gathered a choir of women to sing them. These singers took the songs home and taught their children. The Church in Syria still uses Ephraem's songs and honours him as a great teacher. With him, we can pray,

"Let not our song become a sigh,
a wail of anguish and despair.
In loving kindness, Lord most high,
receive tonight our evening prayer."

Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

So, let us all think about this: the Father has given us life; Jesus has given us salvation, he accompanies us, he leads us, he supports us, he teaches us; and the Holy Spirit? What does he give us? He loves us! He gives us love.

Pope Francis

Today:
Exodus 34:4-6, 8-9
2 Corinthians 13:11-13
John 3:16-18

Monday:
Tobit 1:3; 2:1-8
Mark 12:1-12

Tuesday:
Tobit 2:9-14
Mark 12:13-17

Wednesday:
Tobit 3:1-11, 16-17
Mark 12:18-27

Thursday:
Tobit 6:10-11; 7:1-9-14; 8:4-9
Mark 12:28-34

Friday:
Tobit 11:5-17
Mark 12:35-37

Saturday:
Tobit 12:1, 5-15, 20
Mark 12:38-44

Next Sunday:
Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16
1 Corinthians 10:16-17
John 6:51-58