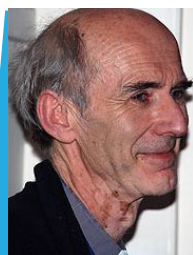


Life to the Full:

Living faith within our families

Monthly newsletter for parents: **November 2017**



God's Guiding Hand

On Sunday 26th November, we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King, which is also National Youth Sunday. The theme for this year is "God's Guiding Hand". Here, Fr Digby Samuels reflects on this theme and explores the Gospel passage, "In so far as you did this to the least of one of these, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40).

A priest was visiting a family where the mother had to stay back from her usual job to look after one of her young children, who was in bed with flu.

Impressed by the evident care being given, he remarked how the little one receiving such love was in fact Jesus 'in disguise'. He quoted the line from the Gospel reading for the Feast of Christ the King: "In so far as you did this to one of the least of these, you did it to me".

At first the mother dismissed this as just a pious remark but, later that day, she reflected on those lines in the Gospel herself. It dawned on her slowly that Jesus' teaching about himself being that 'least brother or sister' in need was meant to be taken as really true. As well as her child, there was Jesus too. The child represented Jesus who was receiving her care through the very care being given the child.

That day the mother received not only a new insight but also a new energy and motivation in how she related to anyone she made time to help. Up to now, this Gospel passage, speaking as it does about the last judgement, had induced certain feelings of fear but now there was a sense of gratitude.

The hungry and thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the prisoner: they all provided ways of meeting Jesus himself. The Gospel was both accessible and down to earth.

If we as adults are doing our best to respond to those in need in this way, we will want our children to experience something similar; maybe they have already been an example to us in their generous response to the needy.

On Sunday 26th November, we celebrate National Youth Sunday and explore the theme of vocation: how God guides along a unique path in life so that, along the way, we can each do something no one else can do.

We could liken this guidance to a Sat Nav. We can go with it or choose not to; we can also misunderstand it or not hear it properly. It's a gift we can pray for, to get a sense of this guidance not just for ourselves but also for our children who will often be hearing or seeing 'Sat Navs' that lead up to cul-de-sacs or even collision courses.

The Holy Spirit, God's guiding Wisdom, will always keep us on track and give us a sense of how to be alongside our children. One

thing is certain, somewhere on the journey the call will be to go to the help of others, as in the Gospel. Seeing Jesus in others in need and going to help them will be a sign that our particular Sat Nav is working well and getting a good reception!

Prayer

Holy Spirit, come.
Give us wisdom and courage
so we may bring your love
wherever it is most needed.
We make our prayer through
Christ Our Lord.
Amen

