

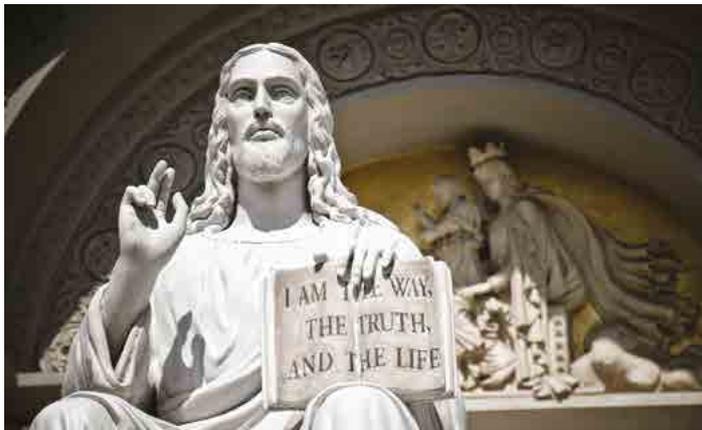
# SUNDAY PLUS



Trust – even when it's tough

A Year of the Word

## Facing the future



by Fr Denis McBride  
C.Ss.R.

An experience of profound loss always makes us question our own direction in life, and in today's Gospel John shows us that it is no different for the disciples. Jesus gives his final discourse before leaving his close followers. He counsels them not to be afraid, for he is going to prepare a place for them and he will return to take them with him. It is Thomas who voices their problem: what direction are they going to take in the absence of Jesus?

What Jesus does not do is give his disciples a theology handbook that will answer all their questions about God. Neither does he hand them a book detailing every law with an index classifying every sin. There are no maps into the future with specific routes clearly arrowed. Jesus simply points to himself: "I am the way, the truth and the life."

But does all this help to give you direction or do you remain as puzzled as the disciples? Soon after Jesus leaves them the disciples realise that they don't have ready answers to all of life's questions. As we learn from the early divisions in the community, they all have to work together to find a way forward. There are many things Jesus did not tell them, and they have to try to face the future with honesty.

Jesus trusts his followers down the ages to face the confusion and complexity of the world. That's why he doesn't leave answers to everything. There's still a lot of working out to be done. Looking to Jesus as "the way, the truth and the life" doesn't actually solve every question effortlessly. But Jesus knew that. Clearly he wants us to put our faith to work.

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications, [www.rpbooks.co.uk](http://www.rpbooks.co.uk)

## Trust is tough!

by Stephen Davies

When life is going well, I find it easy to trust God. Or do I really mean that when life is going as I want it to, trusting God is not difficult?

When life is difficult, when I'm exhausted, or when someone I love is diagnosed with an illness, then it can be much harder to believe that God has everything in hand.

Yet when I look back, it's usually when life was not going well that I can see the hand of God at work: in the people around me; in the change of direction I've had to take; in the growth in myself as I've overcome a challenge, or even failed – but in that failure learnt something new. That's when I usually find God at work.

So this week, I need to take to heart the words of Jesus in

today's Gospel, "You trust in God, trust also in me". It's not sitting back and doing nothing; it's listening to God in prayer and it's also taking action. And each day I'll recite the simple phrase until I can say it authentically, "Jesus, I trust in you."

Stephen Davies is the Red Box Director for Missio, the Catholic Church's official charity for overseas mission, [www.missio.org.uk](http://www.missio.org.uk)

**Lord of hope, it's often easier said than done to put all my trust in you – or anybody else, for that matter. I like to be in control of my life and yet, there are also those moments when I need help and you're the only one with the answers. Stay with me. Amen.**

## Hang in there!

by Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

The expertly homemade Chinying suspension bridge in Zambia crosses the River Zambezi at a frightening height. The local people, used to the narrow, swaying bridge, often ignore the slim steel cable which provides their only handrail and security. Women carry heavy burdens on their heads and babies on their backs. Cyclists pedal unconcerned, ignoring the missing slats underneath their feet and their uninterrupted view of the Zambezi's crocodile-infested waters far below.

Newcomers to the area face a terrifying "joke": someone deliberately

and unexpectedly causes the bridge to sway uncontrollably. The petrified stranger clings to the cables, dreading the horrifying probability of becoming a crocodile's next meal. Only when the "joker" stops their dangerous prank can their trembling victim reach safety. However, having crossed in one direction, there is only one way to return to the village or to the road – and it means re-crossing the bridge.

Can you think of a time when you clung to hope because everything seemed hopeless? Can you remember when you trusted and you were not disappointed?

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

**"There is a loving Father who never forgets his children: entrusting oneself to him does not magically resolve problems, but allows one to face them with the right attitude, courageously: I am courageous because I entrust myself to my Father who takes care of everything and who loves me very much."**

Pope Francis

Today:  
Acts 6:1-7  
1 Peter 2:4-9  
John 14:1-12

Monday:  
Acts 14:5-18  
John 14:21-26

Tuesday:  
Acts 14:19-28  
John 14:27-31

Wednesday:  
Acts 15:1-6  
John 15:1-8

Thursday:  
Acts 1:15-17, 20-26  
John 15:9-17

Friday:  
Acts 15:22-31  
John 15:12-17

Saturday:  
Acts 16:1-10  
John 15:18-21

Next Sunday:  
Acts 8:5-8, 14-17  
1 Peter 3:15-18  
John 14:15-21