

# LIVING FAITH

## A FAMILY RESOURCE

### FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

January 31, 2016

#### GOD'S WORD FOR TODAY

Luke 4:21-30

Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, 'Is not this Joseph's son?' He said to them, 'Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, "Doctor, cure yourself!" And you will say, "Do here also in your home town the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum." ' And he said, 'Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's home town. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up for three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.' When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

**'Today  
this scripture  
has been fulfilled in your hearing.'**



#### REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

Today, Jesus tells the people of Israel that his Good News is for EVERYONE, not just for them! This was hard for them to take! The people of Israel thought that they were special--the chosen people of God. And they were! But God can have many chosen people! That's really the heart of the Good News, isn't it? That God loves each one of us in a special and unique way. That God chooses each one of us in Baptism and chooses us again in Confirmation, and will choose us again and again and again. The Church teaches that the best picture of God's overwhelming love is the love of parents for their children, But you know, children often ask, "Which one is your favourite?" The people of Israel asked the same question, and they got really angry with Jesus when he answered as he did in today's Gospel. They were very jealous. They rejected him and tried to throw him off the cliff. Let's give thanks for a God whose love is so generous that it extends to everyone. We'll never understand that kind of love; we can only give thanks!

## GOD'S LOVE IS FOR EVERYONE A CHAIN OF HEARTS-- A FAMILY ACTIVITY

### MATERIALS:

- Strips of Construction paper, about 25cm X 10cm, one strip for each person in your family or group.
- The construction paper can be any colour
- Pencils, pens or markers
- Scissors
- Tape

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Fold the strip of construction paper like an accordion, so that you have four squares, stacked on top of each other
- Draw a heart on the top square, making sure that the sides of the heart go right to the edge of the paper
- Cut out the heart
- Unfold the strip. You should have a chain of four hearts, all joined.



### ACTIVITY:

- On the first heart, print or write the name of God
- On the second heart, write your own name
- On the third heart, write the name (or names) of someone you love
- On the fourth heart, write the name of someone who needs your prayers, love or support
- These chains show how God's love reaches out into every corner of our world. Imagine billions of these chains, encircling our world with love.
- Make one big chain, by taping all the heart chains together.
- Say a prayer each night this week for one of the people or groups you've named on your chain.

## WHAT WE PRAY IS WHAT WE BELIEVE

### THE LORD'S PRAYER THE PRAYER THAT JESUS TAUGHT US

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those  
who trespass against us  
and lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil, Amen.

#### "ORDINARY TIME" IN THE CHURCH CALENDAR

Did you wonder why last Sunday, this Sunday and next Sunday are called "Sundays in Ordinary Time?" Well, it's not because they're "ordinary" in the way we usually mean that word. After all, with Jesus, nothing is ever ordinary! Ordinary Time in the Church just means that it's not Advent, Christmas, Lent or Easter. There are Sundays of Ordinary Time between Christmastide and Lent, and later in the year between Pentecost and Advent. Ordinary is the same as ordinal, meaning "numbered." There are 33 or 34 Ordinary Time weeks, numbered sequentially, beginning after Epiphany, and ending with the feast of Christ the King.



### The Sisters of Mercy

The Congregation of Sisters of Mercy of Newfoundland is a community of women religious who live and minister according to the spirit of Catherine McAuley who founded the order in Dublin, Ireland 1831. Catherine's gift of mercy shaped the story and ideals of the congregation she founded and became the hallmark of its mission and spirituality.

Three Sisters of Mercy from Ireland arrived in Newfoundland in 1842 and formed the first community of Mercy in the "new world". The story of Mercy in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador is one that is rich in history and tradition, steeped in and shaped by its unique culture.

From the earliest years the sisters were predominantly engaged in visitation of the poor and the sick in their homes, in education and nursing. In more recent years Sisters of Mercy in collaboration with Mercy Associates and other colleagues in ministry endeavor to respond to the needs of our times through ministry in various health care professions, social services and pastoral ministry, in art, music, drama, ecology, justice, advocacy, group facilitation, counseling, spiritual direction and family catechesis. These name some of the works of mercy of sisters, associates and colleagues at home and in Peru.

## CATHERINE McAULEY A WOMAN WHO REVEALED THE LOVE OF GOD

Catherine Elizabeth McAuley was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1778. After her parents died, Catherine lived with Protestant relatives who wanted her to become a member of their church. Catherine remained true to the Catholic faith. The opposition that she faced made her want to know more about her own faith, and she began to seek out good teachers who could help her to learn.

Catherine was invited to be a live-in companion to a wealthy retired couple. Her faith and loving care for them and the needy people in the neighbour was a powerful example for them. They left their fortune to Catherine. This gave Catherine the money she needed to establish a house to serve people in need. It was called the "House of Mercy" and opened in 1827. It included a school, a work area for training the residents for jobs, and dormitories for the poor and women who wished to join Catherine in ministry.

Catherine did not intend to form a religious order. Nuns in Ireland in those days spent most of their time cloistered away from the people Catherine was determined to serve. Catherine knew that to be a real help to the poor and needy, she needed to be among them to know them and serve them. However, the Archbishop of Dublin convinced Catherine that in order to continue her work, she had to found a religious order. Catherine agreed, and she and two friends began their training to become sisters. When they took their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, they included a vow of service to the poor, sick and uneducated. Catherine's order, the Sisters of Mercy, was born in 1831. The sisters were known in Ireland as the "walking nuns" because they spent so much time out in the community, visiting the sick in their homes and helping people.

Catherine died in 1841, but her work is continued by more than 12,000 Sisters of Mercy and many Associates. Catherine McAuley was declared "Venerable" in 1990. This is the first step on the path to sainthood.

