

# SUNDAY PLUS

Love wholeheartedly

## Costly discipleship

by Fr Maurice  
O'Mahony C.Ss.R.

**D**ietrich Bonhoeffer was a Christian martyr of the twentieth century. A German Lutheran pastor, he strongly opposed the rise of National Socialism (Nazism) in Germany in the 1930s. His opposition to Nazism ended in his execution in Flossenbürg prison on 6 April 1945.

In his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, he wrote: "When Christ calls you to follow, he calls you to come and die!" Yes, he was echoing Jesus' words in the Gospel, yet the statement is

stark and unambiguous. "The one who wishes to follow me", Jesus declares, "must first take up the cross". Bonhoeffer describes discipleship as "costly grace", which he certainly lived and died.

"Discipleship" describes the positive response to Jesus' invitation, to come and follow. Pope St John Paul II defined discipleship as "holding fast to the person of Christ". Discipleship is not passive. It means choosing to draw close to Jesus in daily prayer and worship, and to choose to live and proclaim Gospel values.

Discipleship is not exclusive. Jesus' call is to everyone in every time and place. Those who seek the good, the

truth, acting justly, with integrity, are with Jesus not against him. There are no part-timers or zero-hours contracts. The personal cost is not less than everything.

Yet the cost is balanced with the profound joy that the discipleship which takes us to the cross, ultimately leads to the resurrection.

So don't just stand forever on the touchline, wondering what to do. He is calling you. So, take that first step and join him.

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"Worshipping the Lord means giving him the place that he must have; worshipping the Lord means stating, believing... that he alone truly guides our lives; worshipping the Lord means that we are convinced before him that he is the only God, the God of our lives, the God of our history."

Pope Francis

### Everyday saints

by Phil Ferguson

A jogger sat beside the lake, balancing his bowl of cereal on his knees. What a beautiful way to eat breakfast! Hurrying to work, I wondered why I'd never thought of doing something similar.

It's easy to dance to the music of society at large, perhaps joining the early morning rush hour instead of enjoying Creation. Saints challenge us to see life differently.

Returning home from work, a stranger stopped me. "Just take a look at this flower," she said. "Isn't it beautiful?" It was! We spent the next few minutes talking about a flower that neither of us could identify, growing on a roadside bush.

Feast of the week  
Tuesday 2 November

### All Souls

"Hope is a little like leaven that expands our souls. There are difficult moments in life, but with hope the soul goes forward and looks ahead to what awaits us.

Today is a day of hope. Our brothers and sisters are in the presence of God and we shall also be there, through the pure grace of the Lord, if we walk along the way of Jesus...

Hope also purifies us, it lightens us; this purification in hope in Jesus Christ makes us go in haste, readily.

Today before evening falls each one of us can think of the twilight of life: 'What

will my passing away be like?' All of us will experience sundown, all of us! Do we look at it with hope? Do we look with that joy at being welcomed by the Lord? This is a Christian thought that gives us hope.

Today is a day of joy; however, it is serene and tranquil joy, a peaceful joy. Let us think about the passing away of so many of our brothers and sisters who have preceded us, let us think about the evening of our life, when it will come. And let us think about our hearts and ask ourselves: 'Where is my heart anchored?' If it is not firmly anchored, let us anchor it beyond, on that shore, knowing that hope does not disappoint because the Lord Jesus does not disappoint."

Pope Francis

Until she invited me to dance in time to her music, I had been in a hurry – and for what? Admiring that flower was more valuable than arriving home those few minutes earlier.

"A saint is someone who kept on trying when everyone else gave up." How many everyday saints have challenged me to look at the real meaning of life?

*Phil Ferguson is a former teacher.*

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,  
That my thoughts may all be holy.  
Act in me, O Holy Spirit,  
That my work, too, may be holy...  
Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,  
That I always may be holy.

St Augustine

Today:  
Apocalypse 7:2-4, 9-14  
1 John 3:1-3  
Matthew 5:1-12

(S, I): Deuteronomy  
6:2-6  
Hebrews 7:23-28  
Mark 12:28-34

Monday:  
Romans  
11:29-36  
Luke 14:12-14

(S, I): Apocalypse  
7:2-4, 9-14  
1 John 3:1-3  
Matthew 5:1-12

Tuesday:  
Isaiah 25:6-9  
Romans 5:5-11  
Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6

Wednesday:  
Romans  
13:8-10  
Luke 14:25-33

Thursday:  
Romans  
14:7-12  
Luke 15:1-10

Friday:  
Romans  
15:14-21  
Luke 16:1-8

Saturday:  
Romans 16:3-9, 16, 22-27  
Luke 16:9-15

(I): All the Saints  
of Ireland (Feast):  
Ecclesiasticus  
44:1-15  
Luke 6:17-23

Next Sunday:  
1 Kings 17:10-16  
Hebrews 9:24-28  
Mark 12:38-44