

# AT HOME WITH ALIVE-O 7

**TERM 1 No. 1**  
**(September/October)**

To \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_

## Pray together:

Child

A reading from the first book of Kings.

So Elijah sat up and ate and drank. The food and water made him strong enough to walk for forty more days. At last, he reached Mount Sinai, the mountain of God, and he spent the night there in a cave. 'Go out and stand on the mountain,' the Lord replied. 'I want you to see me when I pass by.' All at once, a strong wind shook the mountain and shattered the rocks. But the Lord was not in the wind. Next, there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. Then there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. Finally, there was a gentle breeze, and when Elijah heard it, he covered his face with his coat. He went out and stood at the entrance to the cave.

Parent

Let's listen with Elijah now to the silence...

Let's listen for the Lord in the silence...

Try to spend a few minutes in silence.  
To end, all say 'Glory be to the Father'.

## To Memorise at Home

'Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my

hand.' (Jeremiah 18:6)

'When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek

me with all your heart.' (Jeremiah 29:13)

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has

anointed me to bring good news to the poor.' (Luke 4:18)

'The law of profit alone cannot be applied to that which is essential for the fight against hunger, disease and

poverty.' (Pope John Paul II)

## Discuss...

Mobile Phones

• For and against.

• Who should have them, who shouldn't, and why?

• If phone companies allowed you one number that

you would always be able to get through to in a

difficult situation, a 'special caller', whose number

would you choose and why?

## A prayer for the opening of a new school year

God our Father, we know that you love us as a

mother loves her child.

We know that you care for us as a father cares for

his child.

Today we pray for your blessing on this opening of

our year together.

Bless each one of us.

Open our minds to all the possibilities that this

year holds.

Open our eyes to the wonder of each new day.

Open our hearts to the love of your Spirit.

May your hand be with us, keeping us from hurt

and harm.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



- how 'gearism' can become greed in our world;
- how 'gangism' can become racism in our world;
- how 'gradeism' can become elitism in our world;
- how 'magism' can become shallowness in our world;
- other personal 'isms' in my life and what they can become, e.g. if I am obsessed with entertainment, the latest video or computer game or magazine, etc., do I add to the shallowness and meaninglessness in our world?

## Chatting about 'isms'

- God as potter.
- Does God continue working as a potter today?
- What do you think God the Potter is working on right now?
- What do you think God might have said when he first worked with clay and made human beings?
- How is your own work part of God's work?

## Consider...

## Readings from *Alive-O 7...*

### *Get A Life!*

Some people are just great... like... mega! Mega brilliant. Mega talented. Mega famous. Mega rich. Mega good lookin'. Mega clothes. You know the kind I mean...

And some people just... like... just *aren't*. Like they're cool... NOT! I've spent a long time tryin' to figure out what makes the difference – what makes me like... plain, ordinary, average... like... not dull exactly, but not madly exciting either, not sad or unhappy, but just kinda 'doin' the rounds': you know – home, school, some sport, some music, out with the friends, no big deal, no major hassle. But it's hardly mega. So what's the difference? Well, it's simple really – mega people have mega lives, ordinary people have ordinary lives. So I reckon I gotta get me a 'Life' – I mean a mega life!

I'm gonna get me a life, preferably a magazine life, where magazine boyfriends and magazine girlfriends with magazine clothes and magazine houses with magazine rooms and a magazine garden read the latest magazine news from the magazine world and eat magazine food and talk magazine talk and find magazine answers to magazine-life's problems and every day'll be a glossy new page, with new magazine friends coming to my new magazine house wearing new magazine clothes and talking the same old magazine talk and finding the same old magazine answers to the same old magazine-life problems till next month's issue comes out and my magazine life lies tattered, bored and boring on the coffee table in the dentist's waiting room, flicked through, tossed aside, out of date: 'Next please...'

I'm gonna get me a life.

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### *Vignette 1*

'Why should I do it – I did it last time and the time before that. It has to be somebody else's turn now.'

*'There's no one else here.'*

'You're here; you do it.'

*'Don't you speak to me like that!'*

'Why?'

*'After all I do for you, day in and day out. Do it NOW!'*

'No.'

*'Don't you dare say "no" to me. Do what you're told.'*

'Why do I always have to do everything? Get this, go there, do that; why is it always me? It's not fair.'

'Now!'

'No!'

*'This minute... do you hear me...'*

It was only then that I noticed the phone ringing, but by the time I answered it, it had stopped. The screen said, 'You have one missed call'.

### **Chatting**

- Who's arguing?
- What about?
- Where do you stand in relation to the argument?
- What do you think happened next?
- Imagine yourself in this situation. The missed call is your 'special caller'. What do you think they would have said to you?

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### *The Prophets*

The Old Testament tells the story of an agreement or covenant between God and his chosen people, which meant that the people were to live in peace with those around them, that they were to obey God's commandments and take special care of the poor and the weak. In return, God would take care of them. We read of how the people frequently forgot to live according to the covenant. While they did not completely turn away from the one true God, they worshipped other gods too. And when they found themselves at war or in trouble, they depended on powerful neighbours for protection instead of trusting in God.

God called certain people – the prophets – to remind the people of their covenant with him. The prophets denounced the sinfulness of the people when they turned their backs on the ways of God. They continually urged the people to repent and turn back to God. They spoke the Word of God and reminded people of God's great love. The prophets had a hard life and they were not very popular. Often their lives were in danger. They had to be very strong characters and it was only their close relationship with God that enabled them to keep going.

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### *Here is a Man*

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter's shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He had no credentials but himself. While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends – the twelve men who had learned so much from him, and had promised him their enduring loyalty – ran away and left him. He went through a mockery of a trial; he was nailed upon a cross between two thieves; when he was dead, he was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Yet I am well within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of [people] upon this earth as has this one solitary life.

*(Anon, quoted from Words for Worship)*

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### *The Road Not Taken*

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveller, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –  
I took the one less travelled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

*(Robert Frost)*

## To Memorise at Home

Q. Why do Christians honour Mary?

A. Christians honour Mary because she is the mother of Jesus and our mother.

Let us honour the saints because they loved God and are united with him forever in heaven. May they help us by their prayers.

Q. What does the Bible tell us about sin?

A. The Bible tells us that sin came into the world through disobedience and that all people are sinners and need a saviour.

Q. What do we call the first sin?

A. We call the first sin 'original sin'.

Q. Who is the saviour of the world?

A. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, is the saviour of the world.

### Original Sin

Sin came into the world, originally, through people's disobedience.

Jesus Christ came to save people from that original sin, and from all sin that follows from it.

'To be truly free does not mean doing everything that pleases me, or doing what I want to do...

To be truly free means to use one's own freedom for what is a true good.'

(Pope John Paul II, *Dilecti amici*)

## Do

### Identify False Gods

Invite your child to think of one thing that can enslave children today and stop them from being free to be the unique people God wants them to be.

Make a list of 'False gods to beware of today'.

AT HOME WITH  
ALIVE-7  
TERM 1 No. 2  
(October/November)  
To \_\_\_\_\_  
From \_\_\_\_\_

## Pray

*Hail, Holy Queen*

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy;

Hail our life, our sweetness, and our hope!

To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve;

To you we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in  
this valley of tears.

Turn then, most gracious advocate,

Your eyes of mercy towards us;

And after this our exile,

Show to us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may

Be made worthy of the promises of Christ.



## New Mysteries of the Rosary

October is Mary's month. The new Mysteries of Light are:

1. The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana
3. Jesus proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration of Jesus
5. Jesus gives us the Eucharist

## Consider...

- that the two people in 'The Garden Story' represent humankind in the beginning.
- that, in the beginning, God offered goodness and love; but a harmful choice was freely made, and sin, the bitter fruit of that choice, came into the world.
- wrong choices that you have *freely* made.
- the consequences of those choices.
- that we still make wrong choices today.
- that we still need to follow the path Jesus has created for us.

## Readings from *Alive-0 7...*

### *Icons*

Through the centuries, artists have helped spread the message of Christianity.

One special art form, called an 'icon', became popular in Eastern Europe and Russia. The word 'icon' comes from the Greek word for 'image'. An icon usually has no frame and was normally painted on wood. Icon painters followed particular rules when painting. There is no shadow in an icon, yet it will appear bright because it always has a layer of goldleaf painted on it. The gold was to represent the presence of God as light. An icon always seems very peaceful and tranquil.

Many icon painters were monks and nuns living in monasteries. They had to be people of prayer because an icon was considered more than just a painting. Icons were only painted after much prayer, reflection and meditation. Icon painters never signed their work because they believed they were really working in co-operation with the Holy Spirit. They believed that the icon they painted revealed something of the Holy Spirit within it.

Although most icons are of figures looking straight out, they are not portraits in the normal sense. Usually, we, the viewers, look closely at a painting to see what is happening in it. With an icon, it is as if the eyes of the figure are gazing at us. That is why an icon 'holds' our attention. Nowadays, we don't speak of someone 'painting' an icon. Instead, we say that an icon is 'written' by the iconographer. We need to sit and gaze at an icon in silence to 'hear' in our hearts what it is saying to us.

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### *Extract from a Buddhist poem*

Let no one deceive another.  
Let no one despise another in any situation.  
Let no one from antipathy or hatred  
Wish evil to anyone at all.  
Just as a mother with her own life  
Protects her son, her only son, from hurt,  
So within your own self foster  
A limitless concern for every living creature.  
Display a heart of boundless love  
For all the world  
In all its height and depth and broad extent,  
Love unrestrained, without hate or enmity.  
Then as you stand or walk, sit or lie,  
Until overcome by drowsiness  
Devote your mind entirely to this.  
It is known as living here a life divine.

(T. Berry)

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### *The Garden Story*

One day, while they were on a break, a girl called Emma and a boy called Thomas sat listening to a story...

'The Lord God took a handful of soil and made a man. God breathed life into the man and the man started breathing.'

'And has been breathing ever since,' Thomas added matter-of-factly.

'And continues in us,' said Emma.

The Reader continued... 'God made a woman too and put the man and the woman in a garden

called Eden. The Lord God placed all kinds of beautiful plants and fruit trees in the garden...'

'Sounds like the perfect place; I wouldn't mind living there,' said Emma.

'Imagine...' said Thomas, 'nothing to do but enjoy life all day long.' He sighed a contented sigh.

'Go on Reader,' said Emma.

'Two other trees were in the middle of the garden,' the Reader continued. 'One of the trees was the Tree of Life...'

'That must have been an interesting tree – I wonder what it looked like,' Thomas mused.

'...and what its fruit tasted like,' Emma continued.

The Reader paused and waited patiently.

'All fruit is good and nourishes a healthy life,' Emma said, as much to herself as to Thomas, '...but a Tree of Life – that must have had special fruit indeed!'

'I suppose it would, but what would it taste like and how could you tell when it was ripe for eating?' Thomas asked.

'I'd imagine that, in such a lovely garden, a Tree of Life would have fruit that would taste good no matter when you'd eat it; it'd always be ripe and you'd never die as long as you had such fruit to eat,' Emma suggested.

'You're probably right,' Thomas agreed.

The Reader continued reading... 'The other tree gave power to know both good and bad.'

'I wonder what that tree looked like; I bet its fruit was quite different to the fruit on the Tree of Life,' Emma reflected.

'Fruit that gives power to know the difference between good and bad... that must have had a bitter-sweet taste, don't you think?' Thomas asked.

'You could be right; life certainly has both bitter moments and sweet moments,' said Emma.

'What is the most bitter thing you've ever tasted?' Emma asked, turning to Thomas.

Thomas thought for a moment. 'A sloe,' he replied. 'One day in school, when I was in Infants, we went for a nature walk. I tasted a sloe... Yeugh,' he said, making a face. 'Sloes are the most bitter fruit in the whole world. What's the bitterest thing you've ever tasted?'

Now it was Emma's turn to think. 'Disappointment,' she announced.

'That's not a fruit – not a real fruit; you can't taste disappointment,' Thomas agreed.

'Oh yes you can, and I have. We trained and practised so hard and were so built up for that schools final last year – and then we lost. That was disappointment, and it was as bitter as any sloe, believe me.'

The Reader coughed 'Hmm hmm!' as a sign that she was about to go on...



## Do

Let us prepare ourselves to wait in  
silence...  
Let us sit still...  
Let us be aware of the sounds of the  
world around us...  
Let us be quiet...  
as we prepare a way for the One who is  
coming...  
  
We are listening!  
We are watching!  
We are waiting!  
We are preparing a way for the One who  
is coming!

## To Memorise at Home

*The Ten Commandments in traditional format:*

- First: I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have  
strange gods before me.
- Second: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy  
God, in vain.
- Third: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.
- Fourth: Honour thy father and thy mother.
- Fifth: Thou shalt not kill.
- Sixth: Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- Seventh: Thou shalt not steal.
- Eighth: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy  
neighbour.
- Ninth: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.
- Tenth: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

(November/December)

From

TERM 1 No. 3

To

AT HOME WITH  
ALIVE-7

## Wait at home

- Wait in joyful hope for the coming of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
- Wait to receive three invitations from your son/daughter.

## Discuss...

- your favourite season and why you regard it as such.
- whether or not your mood/feelings change with the amount of daylight.
- each season as a different animal – what animal would you choose for spring, winter, etc.?
- each season as a different colour – which colour would you choose for which season?
- each season as a different type of character.
- which is your favourite Church season and why.

## Pray

We are listening!  
We are watching!  
We are waiting in joyful hope  
for the coming of our Saviour,  
Jesus Christ!



## Consider...

different kinds of preparation for different purposes, e.g.

- preparing to get out to school this morning; to go home this afternoon;
- preparing to go on holiday;
- preparing for tests;
- preparing to go to a disco;
- preparing for a visitor;
- preparing a meal;
- preparing to go to church;
- preparing for Confirmation, etc.

## Readings from *Alive-0 7...*

### *The Church Seasons*

We usually think of a year as something that has four seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. The sun reaches its lowest point in the sky at a time we call the winter solstice, and reaches its highest point in the sky at a time we call the summer solstice. Following the sun's movements, our calendar begins in January as the sun begins to rise in the sky bringing longer days. It ends as the sun sinks back to its lowest point in December, when days are at their shortest.

The Church's year has seasons too. They follow the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The first season in the Church calendar is the season of Advent, when we look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus. The second is the season of Christmas, during which we celebrate Christ's birth. Between Christmas and Easter we have a season or period of time called Ordinary Time, which is followed by the season of Lent. In Lent we prepare to celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, which brings us to the season of Easter. The Easter season begins with three special days called the Triduum – beginning with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, and continuing over Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. The Easter season continues from the Easter Vigil until Pentecost Sunday. After Pentecost there is a second season of Ordinary Time, which runs until Advent.

The Church year begins with the season of Advent, as we 'wait in joyful hope for the coming of Jesus our Saviour'.

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### *The First Christmas Tree*

There is an old German legend that tells us how a spruce fir became the first Christmas tree.

A very holy man who lived in the eighth century was sent from England to Germany to preach about Jesus. His name was St Boniface. On a frosty night in December, he was walking in a wood when he came upon a group of people worshipping a pagan god. This was the night when offerings were made to the god and they had met beneath an oak tree to offer a human sacrifice of a little boy. Just as they were leading the boy forward to kill him, St Boniface came along and stopped them. Instead, the saint felled an old oak tree and, as it fell to the ground, it left unscathed a little fir tree that had been growing between its roots.

The saint turned to the people and said, 'From this night on, that little tree shall be your holy emblem. It is the wood of peace, for your houses are built of it. It is the sign of eternal life, for its leaves are evergreen. It points to heaven and shall from now on be called the Tree of the Christ Child'.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *Advent*

Advent is just like a midwife. Her job is to visit those who are awaiting the birth of a baby and help them prepare, now it's due. She always comes a month beforehand on a Sunday – the front-door bell rings; you open it wondering, 'Who on earth's this?' 'It's me – Advent', she sings cheerfully, joyfully, and enters right in to the life and soul of the place, clad all in purple, her evergreen smile lighting up her rosy pink face. 'So let's have a listen', she says, putting to her ear that cone-shaped midwife's device, '...for listening in to the heart of the matter', she smiles. 'Now, here's my advice; the Little One who is coming – according to my reading of the signs – is well on the way, so if there are things you need to put right, now's the time!

That's the first thing, and when you've done that, think about the new baby's name, make room, in your heart and home – and by the way, your lives'll never be the same! But that's just the nature of *this* new baby; it will turn your lives inside out, your world will be turned upside down but don't worry – that's what *this* baby's about!' And so we prepare as Advent advises and we look forward to the due-date. 'What more can we do now, Advent?' we ask. She says, 'All we can do now – is wait!' So that's what we do – wait in joyful hope, our midwife waits with us too, and somehow Advent's 'just being there' gives *meaning* to the waiting we do. On Christmas morning she's off out the door, her midwifeing over and done, and she leaves in our arms a miracle baby: Emmanuel! God's newborn Son.

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### *Advent Reflection*

In 1969 the world held its breath. This was a moment the whole world had been waiting for. After years of dreaming planning, working, designing and putting into practice, finally the time had come. In living rooms, kitchens, bars, hotels, and even at shop windows all over the globe, people huddled around television sets and stared in anticipation. Finally, before their eyes in black and white they saw what they never would have believed possible. They saw Neil Armstrong climb down the steps of the lunar space module and, with an American flag in his hand, walk – yes *walk* – on the moon! They heard him speak those memorable words, 'One small step for man; one giant leap for mankind!' It was accomplished. A human being had *walked* on the surface of the moon. It was a truly historic moment.

Almost two thousand years before that, in the absence of the world's gaze, well away from television cameras and satellite links, an even more momentous event took place. No one noticed except a few shepherds and three Eastern gentlemen who were awake enough to read the signs and follow them. It was an event that changed the nature of human history and 'future history' forever. In a cave, on a dark lonely hillside outside the city of Bethlehem, a baby boy was born. God came down and walked upon the earth.

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### *Patient People*

Advent is like a waiting room for those who take time to make an appointment with the Spirit of Christmas, the real one, that is, not the fake that's everywhere available, twenty-four seven and in jingling tills rejoices; the one you plug-in and it squawks 'Merry Christmas' in battery-operated voices; the one whose lights get brighter and brasher with every year that goes by, as they try to outdo each other: they'll never outshine that star in the sky. Those who have made an appointment with the true spirit of Christmas know that waiting rooms are unpopular places in today's world of get-up-and-go. What can you do in a waiting room but wait and wait... till the time is right and the door to Christmas swings open and patient people gain insight to the Christian meaning of Christmas which sings out in true festive voice, 'Come! Your waiting is over! Emmanuel! God with us! Rejoice!'

## To Memorise at Home

'But his outer garment was made from a single piece of cloth, and it did not have any seams.'  
(John 19:23)

Faith is a gift from God.  
It enables us to know, love and serve God,  
personally and with others.

## Pray

### *The Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.



AT HOME WITH  
ALIVE-7  
TERM 2 No. 1  
From \_\_\_\_\_  
To \_\_\_\_\_  
(January/February)

## A prayer before work

We begin in the name of the Father and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
Bless the work of our hands!  
Bless the weaving of our lives!



## Discuss...

*The Power of Faith (Luke 17:5-6)*  
The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!'  
The Lord replied, 'If you had faith the size of a  
mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree,  
"Be uprooted and planted in the sea", and it  
would obey you.'

## Consider...

- how cloth is made by weaving;
- all the different invisible things inside you – feelings, creativity, spirit, personality, etc. – as being like different coloured threads;
- your 'self' as a unique piece of cloth that is being made day by day as all your unique coloured threads are woven together by all that happens to you;
- what would happen to you if, somehow, all these threads were to become separated out into single threads.

## Readings from *Alive-O 7...*

### *Mixing Colours*

Mix red and blue for purple,  
Mix red and white for pink,  
Mix red and black and yellow,  
And you'll get brown, I think.

Why don't you mix some colours?  
Mix two or three or four.  
You might just mix a colour  
No one's ever mixed before.

*Eric Finney*

\* \* \* \* \*

### *More Mixing*

Mix thoughts and feelings and spirits  
With colours – red or blue,  
And you might well come up with  
A whole new colourful you.  
Or mix some creativity  
(I'm sure that you have lots)  
With a green or purple or pink personality  
And think some colourful thoughts!

Or mix some browned-off moods  
With envious feelings of green  
And see the world around you  
Like you'd see it in a dream,  
And if at first you don't succeed  
Or your colours and spirits don't rhyme,  
Don't worry – just rinse your mind in the water  
And try it one more time.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The Meaning of Life*

What is the meaning of human life, or, for that matter, of the life of any creature? To know an answer to this question means to be religious. You ask: Does it make any sense, then, to pose this question? I answer: The [person] who regards [their] own life and that of [their] fellow creatures as meaningless is not merely unhappy but hardly fit for life.

*(Albert Einstein)*

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### *The Weaver*

'What is Christian faith?' the boy asked.  
'It is a gift that must be put to good use,' came the reply.  
'What kind of gift?'  
'Put my loom to good use until I return and you will see,' said the weaver.

Unsure of what exactly this meant, the boy nevertheless entered the weaver's workshop and sat down at the loom. He picked up the threads and began to work. In the beginning his fingers fumbled and footloose; under, over, under, over, one row, another row, this colour, that colour. After a few rows, he discovered that he had been pulling the weft thread too tightly and his weave was going wrong in the middle. He had to undo what he had done and begin again. He found it monotonous, boring. But he learned to be patient and soon his fingers grew accustomed to the warp and the weft. He became more skilled in weaving the threads together. He began to see patterns emerging in the fabric. This pleased him and he began to look forward to ending a row and beginning a new one. He learned to choose his colours, sometimes carefully, sometimes randomly,

sometimes colours that contrasted and sometimes colours that blended together. He learned the ways of different kinds of thread – silk, wool, cotton, and how to make adjustments to take account of their different textures. He still made mistakes sometimes, but other experienced weavers helped him and advised him on what to do about these mistakes. He read books about weaving, and stories of how different peoples took the same craft and made their own distinctive traditional patterns. Now he became excited as he neared the end of each piece and he looked all around him for inspiration and ideas for new pieces. But nothing pleased him more than to see a piece of cloth he had made keep someone warm. In time he began to see the whole world with the eyes of a weaver.

Then the owner of the loom returned.

'Have you put my loom to good use?'

'I have,' the boy replied.

The weaver picked up a handful of threads and asked the boy, 'What do you see?'

'I see the beauty, diversity and uniqueness that God has created in people of different colours,' the boy replied.

The weaver pointed to the unfinished cloth, still on the loom. 'What do you see?'

'I see the day-in-day-out way that life works. I thank God at the end of every day and I look forward to the beginning of a new one.'

The weaver picked up a piece of cloth and pointed to a flaw in the pattern. 'What do you see?'

'I see that I have made mistakes in my life; in choices I have made or in things I have done wrong. But I see as God sees, that overall my life is good and God forgives my failings.'

'You have been blessed,' the weaver said. 'You understand what Christian faith is. Continue weaving, and when you have children, teach them how to weave too.'

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How baffling you are, oh Church,  
and yet how I love you!

How you have made me suffer,  
and yet how much I owe you!

I should like to see you destroyed,  
and yet I need your presence.

You have given me so much scandal  
and yet you have made me understand sanctity.

I have seen nothing in the world more devoted to obscurity, more compromised, more false, and I have touched nothing more pure, more generous, more beautiful.

How often I have wanted to shut the doors of my soul in your face, and how often I have prayed to die in the safety of your arms.

No, I cannot free myself from you, because I am you, although not completely.

And where should I go?

*(Carlo Caretto, Letters from the Desert)*

## Discuss...

Fitness:

- what is it?
- how do we get it?
- what exactly is involved?
- have you ever tried to get 'fit' – what kind of effort/commitment does it take?
- what helps a person to 'stick at it'?
- are there things that people often sacrifice or deny themselves in order to be fit?
- why do they do this?
- what different kinds of reasons might there be for getting fit?
- are there different kinds of fitness training?
- how would one become 'fit' to be a concert pianist; a dancer; a chess player; a footballer; an astronaut; a teacher; a parent; a Catholic in today's world?
- what are the basic skills of being a Christian that we need to practise, particularly through Lent?

## To Memorise at Home

Q. What is the 'Golden Rule'?

A. The Golden Rule is  
'Always treat others as you would like them to treat you'.

'...train for a different goal;  
the goal of following Christ...'  
(Pope John Paul II)

(February/March)

TERM 2 No. 2

From

To

AT HOME WITH  
ALIVE-7

## Pray together

*Act of Sorrow*

O my God, I thank you for loving me.  
I am sorry for all my sins, for not loving  
others and not loving you.  
Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen.

*Prayer for Forgiveness*

O my God, help me to remember the times  
when I didn't live as Jesus asked me to.  
Help me to be sorry and to try again. Amen.

## Consider...

- Rather than seeing how dependent we are on God, how we are blessed with God's love, what kinds of things might people tend to depend on today, e.g. what about military might, money, personal power, technology, media, etc.?
- How are those who have died thought of in our society today, e.g. some people may say, 'they are gone so forget them'; *what part does love play in remembering those who have died?*





## Readings from *Alive-0 7...*

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure about you.

We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

*(Nelson Mandela – from his inauguration address as president of Republic of South Africa)*

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Be Blessed**

Be dependent on God, and be blessed!

Be mindful of those who have died, and be blessed!

Be close to the earth, and be blessed!

Be just and fair, and be blessed!

Be compassionate, and be blessed!

Be genuine and true, and be blessed!

Be a peacemaker, and be blessed!

Be prepared to stand up for what is right, and be blessed!

God will bless you when people insult you, mistreat you and tell lies about you because of me. People did these same things to the prophets who lived long ago!

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Creative Relationship**

We have read in the book of Genesis how God created human beings 'in his own image and likeness'. We also read in the Old Testament story of the Covenant, how God began a special relationship with Abraham and his people, a 'Covenant of love'. Because we are like God, we too have a special ability, a talent, for something that we can call '**creative relationship**'. This talent or capacity for 'creative relationship' allows a person to make all kinds of relationships with other people. It also allows each one of us to have a special relationship with God.

In a relationship between people there is both giving and taking. All that is uniquely '**me**' engages with or becomes friends with all that is uniquely '**you**'. I cannot leave part of me outside the relationship. Nor can I engage with only a part of another person. 'Creative relationship' is like one of those colours inside me. It is like a thread in a weaving; it is mixed in with and woven in and out through all the rest of the cloth that is my body, my self. 'Creative relationship' is a thread that runs through my whole self – my physical body – the fact that I am a boy or girl of ten or eleven years of age; my sense of myself and my family and community; my faith; the thoughts, attitudes and feelings that influence my behaviour. 'Creative relationship' is a very definite but invisible part of my genes and my DNA. It is like the special talent human beings have for language. 'Creative relationship' is how we love each other and God.

Our relationships help us to become, more fully, the person God wants us to be. True relationships take time to develop. I cannot know another person immediately, nor can they know me all at once. For example, a husband and wife will still be getting to know each other even after a lifetime spent together. If a relationship does not help the people involved to grow to be more fully 'who' they are and towards God, then it may be the opposite of a creative relationship; it may be a '**destructive relationship**'. Destructive relationships belittle the people involved.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **I'm a Person**

I'm a person; I'm not just a menu  
From which you can pick and choose  
Like 'I'll take you exactly as you are  
But **not** your beliefs or your views'.

I'm a person; I'm not just a menu  
In which you can click 'cut' or 'paste'  
Like – 'look at my hairstyle and "copy",  
Then "cut" my background and race'.  
I'm a person; I'm not just a menu.

I'm woven seamlessly  
From the warp and weft of pattern and colour,  
Of God's love; it's the making of me.

## To Memorise at Home

*Confirmation:* In the sacrament of Confirmation God our Father gives us his Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus.

*God's gift of the Holy Spirit:* God our Father gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us to be like Jesus and to make us his witnesses in the world.

*[Confirmation Classes Only]*

*The Gifts of the Holy Spirit:* The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, right judgement, courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe in God's presence.

*[Confirmation Classes Only]*

*The Fruit of the Spirit:* The Fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.

## Consider...

- a time when someone 'confirmed' you, or 'confirmed' what you were doing, perhaps by using phrases like:
  - 'Well done!'
  - 'You did it!'
  - 'I think you're right!'
  - 'Way to go!'
  - 'Yes!'
  - 'You're looking good!' etc.

AT HOME WITH  
ALIVE-7  
TERM 2 No. 3  
(March/April)  
From \_\_\_\_\_  
To \_\_\_\_\_

## Discuss...

It is desirable that the sponsor for Confirmation be the baptismal sponsor. The sponsor should be a confirmed, practising Catholic who has received the Eucharist. Except in unusual circumstances, a sponsor must be not less than sixteen years old.

- What is a 'sponsor'?
- Why do people or organisations look for 'sponsorship'?
- How do Confirmation sponsors differ from 'commercial' sponsors?
- What qualities would make a person a good sponsor?
- Name the types of situation in which sponsors might help you.

## Pray together

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.  
Enkindle in us the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created,  
And you shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.

## Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, I want to do what is right.  
Help me.  
Holy Spirit, I want to live like Jesus.  
Guide me.  
Holy Spirit, I want to pray like Jesus.  
Teach me. Amen.



## Reading from Alive-O 7...

### *The Civil Rights Movement, Northern Ireland*

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association was formed in January 1967. It sought to gain equality for all the citizens of the State. It watched how Martin Luther King, in the United States of America, had organised people who wanted equality and civil rights into a movement that brought about change. Its aim was to do likewise.

Northern Ireland had been under Unionist rule since it was set up in 1921. For the next forty years, Unionists promoted 'a Protestant Government for a Protestant people'. They were able to do so because they were in the majority and, when elections came, some Unionists were entitled to more than one vote. Under their rule, Catholics were discriminated against – they found it difficult to get jobs and houses. Their rule was upheld by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and a back-up force called the B-Specials, renowned for their bias against Catholics and Nationalists.

The Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland set out to remedy these injustices. It called on Catholics to protest. They organised a series of protest marches. The Unionist authorities banned these marches. One such march took place on 5 October 1968 in Derry. A single TV camera from RTÉ filmed the march and broadcast pictures of the RUC beating marchers, including some politicians, off the streets. These pictures reminded people of the tactics used by police against the black civil rights marchers in the United States.

More marches were organised, but, during a march through Derry's Bogside on Sunday, 30 January 1972, thirteen protestors were shot dead by the British Army who had been supporting the RUC. The Civil Rights Movement would never be the same again.

Speaking thirty-one years later, on the anniversary of that 5 October march, Bríd Rodgers of the SDLP said that the movement had been focused on equality: 'It was the need to address the glaring injustice and inequalities within Northern Ireland which motivated the many thousands of people who took to the streets in peaceful protest'.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The Holy Spirit*

As glass is soft  
And molten in the flame  
And moulded by the craftsman's loving hand;  
As trees can blow and dance  
Before the wind  
To music piped from where the rushes stand;  
As breath gives life  
And power to the arm  
To pull the oar and raise the haycock high;  
The dove of peace  
Is shielding us from harm;  
He hovers in the hearts of you and I.

His fire can warm  
And mould me tall and strong.  
His wind blows through  
My prayer, praise and song.  
His Breath fills me with life  
So I can be  
A sign of love and peace  
For all to see.

(Christy Kenneally)

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The first letter of Eutychus to all Alive-O student followers of Jesus.*

My dear friends,

I live in Greece and I am fourteen years old, so I am no longer considered to be a child. My name is Eutychus (*pronounced 'Yute-i-cus'*). It means 'lucky', and that indeed is what I am. By the time you have finished reading my letter, you will understand why!

I am writing to you from Troas, a town in Greece, on the first day of the week in the first Year of Our Lord. I want to tell you what happened to me so that you, like me, may come to believe that God, through his Holy Spirit, has great things in store for you and for all young people.

A few days ago a Christian called Paul came to our town. He wanted to talk and discuss some things. Greeks like to discuss things, so a room was arranged and people who were interested gathered there. Since I am not a child, though I'm not exactly an adult either (I'm an 'in-between'), I went along too. We began by sharing a meal of bread and wine, which was passed around the room. It was quite a small room and it was packed to the doors. The only seat I could find was in a window. Paul was due to leave the next day and he had much to say, so he talked for a long time.

He spoke about a man who had died some time ago, a man named Jesus. He talked about Jesus' life and how he had died and how his Father had raised him to new life. He spoke about the kind of world Jesus' Father wanted for people – something called 'The Kingdom of God'. This Kingdom of God was quite different to our Greek idea of the perfect world. It didn't have slaves like we do – all its members were free and equal. This was something new to us Greeks.

Someone asked Paul where he had heard all this or how he had come to be interested in it. He began to tell us the story of his life... but you know all that so I needn't tell you again. There were a lot of lamps lit, the room was packed and stuffy... I felt I needed some fresh air. Suddenly – I don't know what came over me – I began to feel incredibly sleepy. I just couldn't keep my eyes open. I could feel myself drifting, falling... falling... and... well, the last thing I remember was Paul saying something about falling off a horse. Then...

### Consider...

#### *The Great Baalschem*

My grandfather was paralysed. One day he was asked to tell about something that happened to his teacher – the great Baalschem. So he told how the saintly Baalschem used to leap about and dance while he was at his prayers. As he went on with the story, my grandfather stood up; he was so carried away that he had to show how the master had done it and he started to caper and dance. From that moment on he was cured. That is how stories should be told.

### Discuss...

- why spring is the most appropriate season in which to celebrate Easter.
- why Easter Sunday falls on a different date every year.
- how celebrating Easter after the spring equinox reinforces Christ as the light of the world.

AT HOME WITH  
ALIVE-7  
TERM 3 No. 1  
(April/May)  
To \_\_\_\_\_  
From \_\_\_\_\_

### Pray

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
Let us show, by how we live, that we believe in the Risen Jesus.



### Pray together

Become still and aware of your breathing.  
As you breathe in, quietly pray the first part of the prayer: 'You are with us, God';  
as you breathe out, quietly pray the second part of the prayer: 'to guide us on our way'.

### To Memorise at Home

*The cross:* In the cross we see what Jesus meant when he said 'No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends'.

*Easter:* At Easter we celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead. We celebrate because we believe that we too will be raised to new life in Christ.

## Readings from *Alive-0 7...*

### *Extract from Chanticleer*

A gaudy bird that stalks in pride  
About the farmyard all day long,  
A legend tells at Christmastide  
It heard the angels' song;  
And that it flew to Mary's side  
When first the mystic starlight shone,  
And sent the message far and wide,  
Mac na hÓighe Slán.

And still when in the lonely tomb  
The mangled form of Jesus lay,  
And all the world was wrapped in glow,  
It watched by night and day;  
And when the Easter morning broke,  
And danced the sun upon the dawn,  
To the risen Christ again it spoke,  
Mac na hÓighe Slán.

(Francis Ledwidge)

[‘Mac na hÓighe Slán’: The son of the virgin safe]

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The Date of Easter*

The date of the Christian feast of Easter changes every year. Until the fourth and fifth centuries there was no agreement as to when that date should be. Then in the fourth century it was decided that Easter Sunday would fall on the Sunday following the paschal full moon, i.e. the full moon that occurs at or after 21 March. This practice of dating Easter was introduced to Ireland in the seventh century. Roughly speaking, Easter Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon after 21 March.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The Risen Jesus*

He was both story and teller.  
He was the bright lamp that shone.  
He was both lost coin and woman-who-searched.  
He was sower and seed in one.  
He bent down, touched, reached out, healed,  
He called people by their name.  
He took Simon Peter's mother-in-law's hand  
And helped her back on her feet again.

He was Rabbi who understood  
That the hungry must be fed,  
With words and deeds united as one,  
In the blessing and breaking of bread.

He is the Easter story,  
It is he who is raised from the dead.  
He is the Easter light that shines.  
He lives in the blessing and breaking of bread.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *Jesus Appears to Two Disciples (Luke 24:13-33)*

That same day two of Jesus' disciples were going to the village of Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. As they were talking and thinking about what had happened, Jesus came near and started walking alongside them. But they did not know who he was.

Jesus asked them, ‘What were you talking about as you walked along?’

The two of them stood there looking sad and gloomy. Then the one named Cleopas asked Jesus, ‘Are you the only person from Jerusalem who didn't know what was happening there these last few days?’

‘What do you mean?’ Jesus asked.

They answered, ‘Those things that happened to Jesus of Nazareth. By what he did and said he showed that he was a powerful prophet, who pleased God and all the people. Then the chief priests and our leaders had him arrested and sentenced to die on a cross. We had hoped that he would be the one to set Israel free! But it has already been three days since all this happened. Some women from our group surprised us. They went to the tomb early in the morning, but they did not find the body of Jesus. They came back, saying that they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he is alive. Some men from our group went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said. But they didn't see Jesus either.’

Then Jesus asked the disciples, ‘Why can't you understand? How can you be so slow to believe all that the prophets said? Didn't you know that the Messiah would have to suffer before he was given his glory?’ Jesus then explained everything written about himself in the Scriptures, beginning with the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets.

When the two of them came near the village, Jesus seemed to be going further. They begged him, ‘Stay with us! It's already late, and the sun is going down.’ So Jesus went into their house to stay with them.

After Jesus sat down to eat, he took some bread. He blessed it and broke it. Then he gave it to them. At once they knew who he was, but he disappeared. They said to each other, ‘When he talked with us along the road and explained the Scriptures to us, didn't it warm our hearts?’ So they got up at once and returned to Jerusalem.

The two disciples found the eleven apostles and the others gathered together. And they learned from the group that the Lord was really alive and had appeared to Peter. Then the disciples from Emmaus told what happened on the road and how they knew he was the Lord when he broke the bread.



### Pray together

Dying you destroyed our death.  
Rising you restored our life.  
Lord Jesus come in glory.

### Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.



_____ From _____	
_____ To _____	
TERM 3 No. 2	
(May)	
AT HOME WITH	
ALIVE-0	
7	

### Consider...

Christ dances in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in eyes and lovely in limbs not his  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.  
(Gerard Manley Hopkins)

### Discuss...

- how the Risen Jesus is present with us at Mass:
- to challenge us;
  - to show us the way;
  - to give us all we need in order to live as he asks;
  - in each other;
  - in all the worry or trouble that we bring with us;

### To Memorise at Home...

*The Presence of the Risen Jesus at Mass*  
The Risen Jesus is present at Mass in:

- the people gathered;
- the celebrant;
- the Word;
- body and blood, soul and divinity, under the appearances of bread and wine.

## Readings from *Alive-O 7...*

### *The Risen Jesus is With Us*

Jesus said, 'Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you!' When we come together at Mass, the Risen Jesus is there with us. When Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday, his followers began to lose hope. They thought that Jesus was gone and that they would never be in his presence again. Yet after the Resurrection, the followers of Jesus did meet the Risen Jesus. The two friends on the road to Emmaus recognised him in the breaking of bread. The disciples on the lakeshore knew it was Jesus when he broke the bread and shared it among them. They remembered how he had told them, 'Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you!'

After Pentecost, when they had been filled with the Holy Spirit, the followers of Jesus began to gather together in Jesus' name to remember all he had done and said, and to take part in the 'breaking of bread'. They knew Jesus was truly present among them. Before long, the little groups or communities who gathered even began to call themselves the 'Body of Christ'.

Today when we gather for the 'breaking of bread' at Mass, we too are the Body of Christ. We too believe that Jesus is truly present in those who have come together in his name. No matter who we are or where we've come from or how we are feeling, when there are at least two or three gathered in Jesus' name, then he is there with us!

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The Risen Jesus is present in the Word of God*

The Risen Jesus is present in the Word of God that is shared at Mass. When we have gathered at Mass in Jesus' name, we know that the Risen Jesus is present in the Word that is read from the Bible. At Mass, we can explore God's Word. We can hear the things that God wants us to hear. We can hear God speak to our hearts.

Through the centuries, people have always found the Risen Jesus in the Word of God. Even when most people could not read, they used art, stained-glass windows, high crosses, music, drama, to bring the Word of God to others. The Risen Jesus is present when the Word of God is expressed through music and song; the Risen Jesus is present when the Word of God is expressed through art – paintings, weavings, stained glass, crosses; the Risen Jesus is present when the Word of God is expressed through drama and movement.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The Risen Jesus is present under the appearances of bread and wine*

At Mass the Risen Jesus is present in his body and blood, under the appearances of bread and wine. Through what the priest says and does and the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ. At the Last Supper Jesus took bread, blessed and shared it, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you.'

He took wine, blessed and shared it, saying, 'This is my blood. It will be shed for you and for all.' In Hebrew, the word 'body' means the whole person and 'blood' is the symbol of life. So when Jesus gave us his body and blood, he was giving all of himself.

### To Memorise at Home

*The Gifts of the Holy Spirit:* The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, right judgement, courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe in God's presence.

*The Fruit of the Spirit:* The Fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.

### Pray together

For all who feel lost because they are alone...  
For those who are confused by all the bad things happening in the world...  
For those who have difficult decisions to make...  
For anyone who feels surrounded by darkness...  
etc.  
Lord Jesus, show them the way.



AT HOME WITH  
ALIVE-7  
TERM 3 NO. 3  
(June)  
From \_\_\_\_\_  
To \_\_\_\_\_

### Consider...

- the task Jesus gave his followers and why he wanted them to do this.
- What is the best way to 'tell' others about Jesus, i.e. is it about more than just words; is it about 'showing' others the kind of life a follower of Jesus tries to live?
- Does Jesus give his followers today the same task?

### Prayer

O my God, help me to remember the times when I didn't live as Jesus asked me to.  
Help me to be sorry and to try again.  
Amen.



### Discuss...

How we can be enslaved today by possessions, power, success, bad habits, etc.

## Readings from *Alive-O 7...*

On the first day of the week we met to break bread together. Paul spoke to the people until midnight because he was leaving the next morning. In the upstairs room where we were meeting, there were a lot of lamps. A young man by the name of Eutychus was sitting on a window-sill. While Paul was speaking, the young man got very sleepy. Finally he went to sleep and fell three floors, all the way down to the ground. When they picked him up he was dead.

Paul went down and bent over Eutychus. He took him in his arms and said, 'Don't worry, he is alive.' After Paul had gone back upstairs, he broke bread and ate with us. He then spoke until dawn and left. Then the followers took the young man home and were very happy.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The Acts of the Apostles*

The book that tells us what happened after the death and resurrection of Jesus is called the Acts of the Apostles. It was written by St Luke, who also wrote one of the four Gospels. In the Acts Luke describes some of the struggles faced by the friends of Jesus after his death, resurrection and ascension, as they tried to follow what he had asked them to do: '...tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judaea, in Samaria and everywhere in the world' (Acts 1:8).

\* \* \* \* \*

Vocation may be to be what we are; but that doesn't leave us *where* we are. We shall need to work to find the structure and form of life that is most our own because it leaves us most alert, most responsive, most open to the never-failing grace of God. We have to find the metre for our poem, the key in which to sing our song to God, the cell where we can pray to him, the person in whom we can love him; to give 'a local habitation and a name', face and flesh, to our own particular following of Christ.

(from *Open to Judgement: Sermons and Addresses* by R. Williams)

\* \* \* \* \*

### *'Where do we go from here?'*

The first people to be faced with the question 'After Confirmation/Easter – where do we go from here?' were the early followers of Jesus Christ, who later became known as Christians. The Pentecost story of the coming of the Holy Spirit is one that confirms the amazing energy and enthusiasm for good with which a Spirit-filled people can act. The presence of the Spirit can throw open doors in our lives that we may have been keeping locked – for many different reasons. It can carry us over the threshold and set us on a journey into the big wide world. Although a rocket requires a huge boost or burst of energy to launch it, a different kind of energy is needed to sustain it in flight. So too with us. The energy of Pentecost, with which the Holy Spirit launched the first Christians on their journey, is not the same as that which the Spirit gives to keep them – and us – going. And like us with Confirmation/Easter, indeed with any big occasion, once the initial excitement is over, we are faced with the question, 'Where, and how, do we go on from here?'