

Ardmore Parish Newsletter

SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2021 – SIXTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

First Reading

Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46

The Law regarding leprosy is given to Moses and Aaron.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:31—11:1

Paul urges the Corinthians to imitate him as he imitates Christ.

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:40-45

Jesus cures a person with leprosy, who reports his cure to everyone.

[‘Stretched out his hand...’](#)

Jesus, in today’s Gospel, cures a leper by the healing touch of his hand. A leper was completely outcasted from society due to the huge stigma surrounding the disease, which was highly contagious but was also seen as a punishment from God in Jesus’ time. Jesus is moved with pity for this man and reaches out to him. Jesus sends the man to the priests, as a testimony to them. Jesus’ ‘pity’ also conveys anger at the leper’s situation. It is the religious hierarchy of Jesus’ time who have alienated this man. What they are incapable of doing (healing him), Jesus has done by ‘stretching out his hand’ in love.

A question for us from this Gospel today might be, who are those our society outcast? Who is alienated in our communities? What moves you with pity? Who is it that we need to reach out to at this time?

Jesus, in Mark’s Gospel, is forever asking people to keep quiet and not tell anyone about what he does. Yet, after such a radical encounter with God which frees this man from all that keeps him trapped, of course he wants to shout from the roof tops. Why would Jesus want his miracles to be kept a secret? Jesus wants to be able to fulfil his mission without attracting the wrong kind of attention. Eventually those who are against him will use encounters like this one to compile evidence against him. For now, the less they know the better. We might think today of those who bravely speak out, even if it means they are punished in some way. May all of us have the courage, like the man who is healed in the Gospel today, to proclaim the truth, even if it costs us.

‘There is a need for paths of peace to heal open wounds. There is also a need for peacemakers, men and women prepared to work boldly and creatively to initiate processes of healing and renewed encounter.’
(Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 225)

ASH WEDNESDAY, the first day of Lent, is on Wednesday of this week. It is a day of fast and abstinence. We will not be able to have the distribution of Ashes this year. This is a diocesan-wide decision, taken in the interests of everyone's safety and in keeping with the current restrictions.

TRÓCAIRE LENTEN PARISH RESOURCES 2021 www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-Ireland/parishes/resources/ For more information on our parish resources, parish workshops and Lent webinars, contact colm.hogan@trocaire.org

St Valentine's Day is celebrated today. The following Valentine Prayer is taken from the Family Prayer Book:

I said a Valentine prayer for you and asked the Lord above
To fill your heart and bless your soul with the precious gift of love.
I asked him for sincere love, the kind that's meant to stay,
Just like the generous love You give to those You touch each day.
I prayed for love from family and for every cherished friend,
Then I asked the Lord to give you His love that knows no end.

St Valentine, pray for us

KNOCK SHRINE – ONLINE LENTEN PROGRAMME: Knock Shrine is hosting a series of online discussions on the Thursday nights of Lent, at 8.30pm. Under the title 'Living Christian Faith – Lenten Conversations', there will be a different theme each week. *Where do we find hope and joy in our lives? How can our faith build mental strength, wellbeing and resilience? How has the Covid pandemic impacted upon our faith?* These are just some of the questions that will be explored over the six weeks. Join in on www.knockshrine.ie/watch-live or on Facebook @knockshrine

VIRTUAL LOUGH DERG PILGRIMAGE: Bishop McKeown invites those who can to join him by webcam from St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry, on Friday (19 February) for a 24-hour period of prayer and penance (similar to the Virtual Pilgrimage of the first weekend of Lent last year). In stating that it is fitting to hold this time of prayer and penance on the World Day of Prayer for Victims and Survivors of Abuse, the bishop said he proposes "to mirror some of the key elements of the centuries-old Lough Derg pilgrimage." Fast starts at 12midnight on Thursday 18 February (finishing after 6am Mass on Saturday). The 24-hour Vigil starts at 6.00am on Friday, with Morning Prayer. For those interested in participating, full details of the virtual pilgrimage can be found on <https://www.derrydiocese.org/news/day-of-prayer>.

The Net – February 2021

Sharing the fruits of the faith in the Derry Diocese. With Covid-19 restrictions still in place, the February edition of 'The Net' will only be available on the Diocesan website -

<https://www.derrydiocese.org/news/the-net-february-2021>

However, the publication will be available again in parishes when the restrictions are lifted. **Enquiries to – editorthenet15@gmail.com.**

Coverage in this month's edition includes:

- Uplifting Catholic Schools Week programme goes down a treat
- Joint parish and school celebration in Ardmore *by Fr Neil Farren*
- Celebrating the precious gift of grandparents
- School year in St Colm's Draperstown a good faith diary – *Roisin McKenna*
- New St Colmcille's Claudy principal helping schools navigate online resources
- *Youth writers share thoughts on...* Lent, Cherishing baptismal identity, Catholic Schools Week, Christian Unity, St Brigid, and Pope Francis encouraging youth
- New youth online bookclub *by Hollie Frystal*
- Derry Youth Ministry update
- Song released for WYD 2023
- Children's Catechism Club – C3 *by Veronica Harley*
- Is God asking big sacrifices for Ireland?...Remembering Sr Ruth O'Callaghan, Servant Sister
- Hopes high for opening of Sr Clare Crockett beatification cause
- Co Tyrone singer pays tribute in song to Sr Clare
- Strabane youth help mark 125th anniversary of Immaculate Conception Church *by Hollie Frystal*
- Bridget Carroll's legacy to Long Tower Church *by Ivor Doherty*
- May Lent be a time of prayer & discernment – *Bishop Donal*
- 'Year of the Family' reflection *by Sharon Mallett*
- Reflections from across the Diocese on the Holy Spirit
- Christian Unity Week – Main churches in Derry collaborating for decades *by Bishop Donal*

- *Cuimhní Cóivide – Part 1 - Irish Page by Fr Oliver Crilly*
- *St Joseph – His actions speak louder than words by Fr Joseph Varghese*
- *Termonbacca Novena to Sleeping St Joseph*
- *Consecration to St Joseph*
- *Reflecting on God's Mercy – Part 1 – by Bishop Donal*
- *Life is beautiful because of Mercy by Fr Francesco Gavazzi CFR*
- *The ancient Celtic Church & Renewal of Faith in Ireland by Fr Neal Carlin*
- *Fr Stephen Quinn OCD to lead Vocations Holy Hour*
- *A Word of God for your family life by Fr Johnny Doherty CSSR*
- *A reflection on marriage by Fr Stephen Quinn OCD*
- *The Quality of Mercy by Fr John McLaughlin*
- *National Divine Mercy Conference goes online*
- *The rise and growth of food banks by Denis McGowan*
- *Memories of Dungiven by Vera McFadden*
- *Trócaire Lenten Appeal 2021*
- *Thornhill calendar offers creative Lenten ideas*
- *Quiz Time with Lawrence*