

Ardmore Parish Newsletter

SUNDAY 28 MARCH 2021 – PALM SUNDAY

'HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD'

On Palm Sunday, the Church recalls the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem to accomplish the Paschal Mystery. The Paschal Mystery includes the sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension of Jesus into glory and the sending of the Holy Spirit on the disciples to continue the work Jesus began. Although in our liturgy these events are spread over a period of seven weeks, they are an indivisible single accomplishment of Jesus for all who are baptised into the Holy Trinity. We pray that the sacred events of the Easter Triduum will be a blessed and meaningful time for all of us and for our parish.

SACRAMENTS OF FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION 2021:

In a statement to the priests of the diocese this week, Bishop McKeown announced the deferment of First Holy Communion this year until September and indicated that **provisional** arrangements for Confirmation in June could proceed.

*In his statement, the bishop stated, "I have no doubt that parishes, with their extensive COVID safety teams, stewards and sanitising policies and procedures are safe places for the celebration of First Communion and Confirmation. However, I am concerned about the parties and other socialising which, although completely disconnected from the celebration of the sacraments and the environs of the church, can and often do occur. It must also be recognised that such parties and socialising are a matter for the civil authorities and, indeed, are currently banned under civil COVID regulations; it is for the civil authorities to enforce civil laws. Having said that, I think that, as church, we should go the extra step to assist in protecting public health, by avoiding those situations which might with some regularity lead people to organise parties. Therefore, I have taken the difficult decision, after some consultation, that the celebrations of First Holy Communion are to be deferred until September 2021. I do not take this decision lightly, but I am conscious that we must do everything we can to ensure that life is protected in the midst of this pandemic, noting that there has been some upturn in case numbers locally in recent days. As regards the celebration of Confirmation, it is acceptable for parishes to make **provisional** arrangements for these in the month of June. However, I will review the situation in the middle of May."*

WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS: Please note that the number permitted to attend remains unchanged at 25.

BAPTISMS: Only parents and godparents may attend (and siblings of the child being baptised).

Mass of Chrism will take place on Holy Thursday, 1 April at 10.00am in St. Eugene's Cathedral, Derry. It can be viewed via St. Eugene's Cathedral webcam provided by Church Services. Bishop Donal McKeown, will be the Principal Celebrant. The bishop will bless the oil of catechumens, the oil of the sick and the oil of Chrism, all of which are used for the celebration of the sacraments during the year.

Holy Week Online Retreat from the Priory Institute.

This retreat is offered entirely online with fifteen-minute video reflections focusing on the verses of the psalm that is contained in the liturgical readings for each day of Holy Week. The first reflection will be available on Palm Sunday and all reflections will remain to watch until 11 April. There is no cost for this retreat but you must register with your email address and have access to the internet to participate. Register now at prioryinstitute.com or telephone 00353 1 4048124.

TROCAIRE COLLECTION: The Trocaire Lenten Boxes are normally returned during Holy Week. With the church closed for the Holy Week ceremonies and limited church gatherings, some parishioners may not be in a position to return their Trocaire box to the church. In these circumstances, the following are suggestions as to how you might return your Trocaire box:

- Leave it through the letterbox of the Parochial House
- Online banking (directly to Trocaire). Bank details are: Sorting Code: 93.80.92, Account No: 8822 7020.
- Send a cheque by post to Trocaire at 50-52 King Street, Belfast, BT1 6AD.
- There is a freephone number, 0800 912 1200, through which you can donate
- Donate online on the Trocaire website

For those who are returning their Trocaire box to the church or Parochial House, you are asked to include notes or cheques only, in so far as possible, for ease of counting in general and, in particular, to reduce the level of risk for the counters. Please note: cheques should be payable to Trocaire (not the parish). Thank you for your co-operation.

DIVINE MERCY NOVENA: Many people like to pray the Divine Mercy Novena for the nine days from Good Friday (2 April) until the first Saturday of Easter (10 April), leading into Divine Mercy Sunday (11 April). For those who would like to join in the Novena but do not have a copy of it, you can access it on:

<https://divinemercury.life/the-divine-mercy-novena/>

PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE?

Catholic Engaged Encounter: A 'Zoom' online Marriage Preparation course is planned for 27th to 28th March 2021. This 2-day course is a positive way of preparing for Marriage, where you will discover how you can enrich your future relationship. For information and booking go to marriageencounter.ie or call 028 2763 8512.

Diocesan Daily Lenten Prayer

Loving Father, To prepare for His mission of proclaiming Your kingdom to the world, Your Son Jesus was guided by Your Holy Spirit to the quiet of the desert. In these Lenten days, I pray that I will be guided by that same Spirit, to a place of renewal in my heart and mind, so that I will seek opportunities for daily personal prayer, personal sacrifices and acts of kindness. With Your help, may I too be truly prepared to share in the story of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Your Son, our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAYER FOR OUR PROTECTION

We ask for prayers for those affected by the Coronavirus. Placing all our trust in the Lord, and asking Our Lady to intercede for us, we invite everyone to pray these prayers:

Extract from Saint Patrick's Breastplate

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To you I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy, hear and answer. Amen.