

# Ardmore Parish News

Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

***Following the recent briefing by the Chief Medical Officer, the Chief Scientific Officer and Catholic Bishops of N. Ireland – From 7 January until 6 February the Celebration of Mass and other liturgies should take place without the presence of people, except for Marriages and Funerals which are restricted to 25 people.***

## **First Reading** - Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Moses tells the people that God will raise up for them a new prophet.

## **Second Reading** - 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

Paul expresses his concern that those who are married are more likely to face the distractions of earthly life than those who are celibate.

## **Gospel Reading** - Mark 1:21-28

Jesus heals a man with an unclean spirit and his fame spreads throughout Galilee.

## **Background on the Gospel Reading**

Today's Gospel continues our reading from Mark and describes what some believe was likely to have been a typical day in Jesus' ministry. Jesus and the disciples that chose to follow him in last week's Gospel arrive at Capernaum, a small village on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus teaches in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Mark reports that the people respond to Jesus' teaching with astonishment, noting Jesus' authority and contrasting it with the scribes'. Early in Mark's Gospel we already find evidence of the tension that will manifest itself fully in Jerusalem.

After Jesus' preaching, an even more astonishing thing happens. A man possessed with an unclean spirit calls out to Jesus. As we see in this example and throughout Mark's Gospel, the spirits and demons seem to know Jesus and are often fearful of him. In fact, they seem to understand Jesus' identity better than his disciples. As we will read again and again in Mark's Gospel, Jesus orders the spirit to be quiet and drives the unclean spirit out of the man. Jesus' ability to heal those possessed by demons is an indication of his power over evil.

In the prescientific age of Jesus' time, all illnesses were understood to be manifestations of evil and sinfulness. Our modern understanding of illness is very different. Possession by unclean spirits may have been a way to describe what we might call mental illness today. It may have even been a way of describing certain

kinds of physical conditions. There is evidence that there were many kinds of exorcists and healers in first-century Palestine. Jesus appears to be like these healers, but he heals with unique authority and connects his healing activities with the words of his preaching.

We are missing the point that Mark is trying to make in this Gospel, however, if we try to explain away the healing work of Jesus. The crowds see in Jesus' cure of the possessed man further affirmation of his authority. Jesus' power to heal gives greater credence to his teaching. Jesus impresses the crowds through his words, which are manifested with power in his deeds. Mark's Gospel tells us that because of the authority with which he healed, Jesus' fame spread throughout all of Galilee.

## WHSCT- Free Mental Health Courses

WHSCT Recovery College are offering is offering FREE courses on mental health and emotional wellbeing. Courses start in March via ZOOM (if restrictions are lifted, the course will continue face-face). Shortened courses are currently available to watch on the trusts website: [www.westerntrust.hscni.net/service/recovery-services/recovery-college](http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net/service/recovery-services/recovery-college).

The Recovery College Spring 2021 Prospectus is available on the trusts website or can be posted to you. For information or to request a prospectus in the post, contact: 02882 833291 or email: [recoverycollege@westerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:recoverycollege@westerntrust.hscni.net)

## St Angela's College, Sligo

**Is inviting applications for the following course beginning Autumn 2021**

**Part-Time Certificate in Religious Education (Primary) with Online Delivery**

The course is open to: Qualified primary school teachers; Qualified post-primary school teachers who wish to transfer to primary school teaching. Parents, sacramental preparation teams and parish catechists who have a specific interest in the area of primary religious education may also apply.

**Closing date for Applications is Friday 14th May 2021. This date may be extended.**

**For further information and application forms contact Mary Kearns, Senior Administrator, School of Education, St. Angela's College, Lough Gill, Sligo**

**E. [mkearns@stangelas.nuigalway.ie](mailto:mkearns@stangelas.nuigalway.ie)**

or visit Website: [www.stangelas.nuigalway.ie](http://www.stangelas.nuigalway.ie)

## FEASTS OF THE WEEK

**Monday 1 February** - St Brigid is renowned for her hospitality, almsgiving and care of the sick. She was born c454. When she was young her father wished to make a very suitable marriage for her, but she insisted in consecrating her life to God. She received the veil and spiritual formation probably from St Mel and stayed for a period under his direction in Ardagh. Others followed her example and this led her to found a double monastery in Kildare with the assistance of Bishop Conleth. She died in 524 and her cult is widespread not only throughout Ireland but in several European lands. The St Brigid's Cross, in legend used by Brigid to explain the Christian faith, remains a popular sign of God's protection.

**Tuesday 2 February** - The Presentation of the Lord – Candlemas Day.

**Wednesday - St Blaise** - The blessing of St Blaise is a sign of our Faith in God's protection and love for us and for the sick "Through the intercession of St Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from all ailments of the throat and from every other evil, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit"

## ST JOSEPH

Pope Francis has proclaimed "A year of St Joseph" from the 8 December last until 8 December 2021. The Holy Father says: 'Covid-19 has helped us see more clearly the importance of people, who though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day'. In this they resemble St Joseph – 'The man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence'. In St Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God.

**ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS** *In times of calamity and disaster such as the outbreak of a plague which in these days is called Covid-19 or Corona virus – we take the advice and example of the Saints and Consecrate our parish and our family and friends to the safety and Protection of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus*

**SPIRITUAL COMMUNION** - My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you now as if you were already there and I unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you. AMEN