

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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1st Sunday of Lent

18th February 2024

Weekend Masses

Sat 6:00pm Dechomet & 7:30pm Leitrim
Sun 9:00am Gargory & 11:00am Dromara

Weekday Masses

Mon 9:00am Leitrim & 7:30pm Dechomet
Tues 9:00am Dromara
Wed 7:30pm
Fri 7:30pm Dromara

Cemetery Sunday 26th May

Recently Deceased



Pat Campbell

England, formerly Dromara

ANNIVERSARIES

LEITRIM

Sat 17th Patrick Malone
John McKay

Wed 21st Eileen Cunningham

Sat 24th Seamus, Bridie & Patricia Savage

GARGORY

Sun 18th Teresa, Patrick & Elizabeth McCartan

DROMARA

Sun 18th Mary McBride (*Downpatrick*)
Philip Lundy & Lundy, McGrillen
& Cauley Families

Sun 25th Mae & Dan Flynn
Daniel, Mary & Liam Marmion &
Deceased Gamily Members

This year's **Trócaire Lenten Appeal** highlights how climate change has affected the lives of those who live in Malawi. Any donation to Trócaire, small or large, sent through the parish, or directly to Trócaire is a life-changing gift.

SVP

Dromara 077 3883 8191
Drumgooland 078 2541 9067

Diocesan Safeguarding contact:

Stephen Sherry 073 0124 6329

Email: safeguardingdirector@dromorediocese.org

Collections	Dromara	Drumgooland
Parish	£658	£933

Thank you for continuing to support your parish

We welcome into Dromara Parish
Cora Marie Lynch

St Mary's PS Dechomet Parents' Support Group would like to invite you to a **Family Bingo Night** in Liatroim Fontenoys GAC Hall on **Fri 23rd Feb at 6.30pm.**

Brown Scapular

There will be an opportunity to be enrolled in **Our Lady of Mount Carmel's brown scapular** after 6pm Mass in Dechomet on **Sat 2nd Mar.**

The brown scapular is a pledge of love and devotion to Our Mother Mary through which many heavenly graces and blessings are promised. There will be leaflets with more information and scapulars available at the back of the church.

Youth Activities

Young Adults Lourdes Pilgrimage

6th to 11 Aug, still places left, £599 for 5 nights, accommodation, food, flights and enriching Lourdes experience.

Stay Awake show solidarity with the homeless. Group challenge to stay awake from 7pm to 7 am, time spent indoors and outdoors, learn from those who work with the homeless.

Knock Volunteering Programme for Youth

15 to 18 years, June 28th to 30th;
July 26th to 29th includes climbing Croagh Patrick, and August 16th to 19th helping with Novena and family day.

If you are interested in any of the above or want more information email Frances at

youthdirector@dromorediocese.org

include your mobile number, or phone 028 30833898

Sunday Message

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WORD

Year B • 18 February 2024 • Colour: Violet • Psalter Week 1

DUST AND A CROSS

MARK 1:12-15



Mark's account of Jesus' temptation in the desert is shorter than those of Matthew and Luke. Mark simply records that Jesus went into the desert to do battle with Satan, and that he emerged victorious forty days later to begin his ministry.

Still, for Mark, as for the other Gospel writers, Jesus' time in the desert is of crucial importance. This is the time when Jesus steps back from the world to think, to pray, and to discern what God wants him to do. It is the time when he gets the measure of his enemy - Satan.

In the desert, Satan desperately tries to get Jesus to betray his mission. He hopes to steer Jesus from the path of salvation planned for him by the Father, and to follow Satan's way rather than God's way. But all Satan succeeds in doing is helping Jesus to clarify his mission.

Now Jesus is ready to become God's spokesman. He tells people that the time has come to let God rule in their lives. It is time to believe the Good News.

Just as his forty days in the desert helped Jesus to focus on his mission, and to test his commitment to his Father, the forty days of Lent is that time when we are called to look more closely at our relationship with God, and to confront the power of darkness that prevents us from letting God rule in our lives. ■

DO

Lent is a time for prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Traditionally, Christians fasted and shared what they saved with the poor. This Lent keep a record of what you save as a result of your fasting, and give it to charity.

PRAY

Pray for the Church this Lent, for the renewal it needs, so that it can give more effective witness to Christ.

SAY

"Lord, give me a spirit of repentance during these 40 days so that I can become the kind of person you want me to be."

LEARN

Lent originally began on the first Sunday - and not on Ash Wednesday - giving six weeks of Lent with six fasting days (excluding Sunday). In order to bring the number up to 40, additional days from Ash Wednesday onwards were included, and Ash Wednesday became the 'official' beginning of the Lenten season.

REFLECT

Several years ago, then American Vice President Joe Biden was attending a news conference in Washington. Biden had a large, dark mark on his forehead, and journalists at the event noticed it. The Sky News presenter back in London was especially curious. After the news conference ended, she asked Sky's Washington correspondent if he knew what had happened to the vice president. Did he have a fall? Had he bashed his head against something? The correspondent didn't know but promised to find out. A few minutes later, back on air after an ad break, the suitably abashed presenter apologised for not realising it was Ash Wednesday and the blob on Biden's forehead was the ashes he had received at Mass that morning.

Not very long ago, especially in Catholic countries, it would have been impossible to not know when Ash Wednesday had come round. Almost everyone wore ashes, often the darker and more prominent the better. People were happy to wear them as they

went about their business, going to work or to the shops. They wore them as a sign of faith and penance.

Sadly, that is no longer the case, and fewer people wear the ashes than even a decade ago. Which is a pity because the little ceremony of the ashes is a beautiful, powerful ritual that eloquently describes what the season of Lent is all about, indeed what life is all about for people of faith: dust and a cross. Our foreheads are marked with dust in the form of a cross. There are several formulae that can be used when the ashes are applied. One of the most common says: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return."

Dust reminds us of our nothingness. It is the symbol of coming to nothing, as the German theologian Karl Rahner, once described it. Dust has no content, no form. We find it everywhere. It is anonymous, useless, shapeless, valueless. And yet dust is what we are.

The ashes placed on our foreheads remind us that we are dust. From the moment we are born, we are in the process of dying. No matter how rich, powerful, fit, healthy, significant or seemingly indestructible we are, we will die one day. Our bodies will become dust.

But, thank God, that is not the whole story. Because the dust placed on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday is done very deliberately in the shape of the cross. The symbol of the cross reminds us that we are redeemed people. Yes, we will die one day, we will encounter setbacks and pain and loss, we remain dust, but the sign of the cross is a statement that death is not the end of our dust. The Son of God took on flesh like ours, and became dust on a cross to save us from sin and bring us to salvation. The cross is the symbol of our redemption.

Dust and cross bookend our Lenten journey. Dust and cross also tell us Christians all that we need to know. ■