

The heresy known as Jansenism taught a narrow view of God and salvation. Alphonsus challenged it by every means at his disposal, including devotion to Mary, the Mother of the Lord, frequent communion and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. For this he wrote a little book, called 'Visits to the Most Blessed Sacrament', which has been translated into countless languages and has never been out of print in over 250 years. As a moral theologian, he sought to bring this compassionate view of God to the confessional. To reach ordinary people with the great truths of faith, he wrote many popular hymns. The most popular Christmas song in Italy is still his 'You have come down from heaven' that has been recorded by Luciano Pavarotti and Andrea Bocelli.

One of Alphonsus' many eucharistic hymns was translated into English by a Redemptorist, Fr Edmund Vaughan (1827-1908). Fr Vaughan belonged to an old Catholic English family which numbered many priests, bishops and a cardinal among its members. He also founded the first house of his order in Australia. Fr Edmund was a parish missionary and, like Alphonsus, he composed many hymns for popular use by the people.

THE MEANING OF THE HYMN

The four verses of the hymn meditate on aspects of the mystery of the Lord's presence in the Eucharist. It begins by recognising that the bread of the host is a veil that hides God's presence from our human sight:

"O Bread of Heaven, beneath this veil,
thou dost my very God conceal.
My Jesus, dearest treasure, hail!
I love Thee and, adoring, kneel.
Each loving soul by Thee is fed
with Thine own Self in form of Bread."

The only response possible for the believer is to adore and marvel at the precious gift they have been given. The real riches of the Eucharist, however, is that it is food for the believer, but it is also the gift of God's own self.

The second verse goes on to ponder more intently the meaning of the food of life we have received. It is the "pledge of immortality" through which we shall be raised on the last day and which will support us as we make our journey through life:

"O food of life, Thou Who dost give,
the pledge of immortality:
I live, no 'tis not I that live;
God gives me life, God lives in me.
He feeds my soul, He guides my ways,
and every grief with joy repays."

The third verse invites us to meditate on the bond of love that unites the believer and the Lord through the sacrament of the Eucharist. To realise the sheer depth of that love is to want to make some return to such a loving God:

"O Bond of love that dost unite
the servant to his living Lord!
Could I dare live and not requite
Such love – then death were meet [fitting] reward.
I cannot live unless to prove
Some love for such unmeasured love."

The hymn now looks to the end of our lives and our meeting with the one who loves us. The reception of the Eucharist is the promise of what lies in store for us:

"Beloved Lord, in Heaven above,
there, Jesus, Thou awaitest me,
to gaze on Thee with endless love;
Yes, thus I hope, thus shall it be.
For how can He deny me Heaven,
who here on earth Himself hath given?"



Today's readings

Lev 13:1-2, 44-46
1 Cor 10:31-11:1
Mk 1:40-45

Leprosy is the name for a variety of skin infections in the Bible. Not all of them correspond to Hansen's disease, which is severe but now treatable by drug therapy. Ancient medicine and religion were often closely intertwined. In Israel the priest was the one who identified the disease and certified to its cure on the basis of the symptoms described in Book of Leviticus (first reading). Mark uses a very strong Greek word to describe Jesus' response to the man – "he was deeply moved" or "his whole being churned with pity". The sick Jesus encountered were not material he could use to prove his point by a miracle. They were suffering people in need of comfort and reassurance. He does not keep his distance for fear of infection but reaches out in comfort and solidarity to a fellow human being.

GOD'S WORD TODAY

Stu(space)

12 February 2021 – 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

Psalter Week 2

SERIES: SING ONCE, PRAY TWICE

Continuing Series

Hymns are an important part of Catholic worship. We will look at some of our familiar hymns. Musical versions are available on YouTube



"O Bread of Heaven", composed by St Alphonsus Liguori, is a popular hymn for communion and for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

THE STORY OF THE HYMN

Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787) was a promising young lawyer in Naples until he abandoned the legal profession at the age of 26 to become a priest. He founded a religious order, the Redemptorists, to preach popular missions in Southern Italy. Alphonsus gave his order the motto "With him there is plentiful redemption" as he wanted them to proclaim God's generous love.

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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6th Sunday in Ordinary Time – 14th February 2021

Recently deceased Sean Gribben, Belfast

Please remember these anniversaries in your prayers

Sat 13th Tessie Matheson (MM)
Martin Matheson
Fr Frank Lyons
Rita Murray
Sun 14th Marie King (Gransha)
Sean Lundy
Stella Doyle
Tue 16th John McKay
Fri 19th Dean Tony Davies (MM)
Terry Davies (MM)
Sat 20th Patrick Malone
Sun 21st Mary McBride (Downpatrick)
Philip Lundy and Deceased Members
of Lundy, McGrillen and Cauley
Families
Teresa and Patrick and Elizabeth
McCartan

Trócaire

For full details of this year's Trócaire Campaign go to the trocaire.org website. This year the UK government is offering matched funding for the Lenten Trócaire Campaign. That means that every pound donated will be doubled.

The distribution of Trócaire boxes is not practical at the moment. Have you a container to use, can the children make and decorate a Trócaire box for your home, for their grandparents home?

The new Email Address is up and working:

dromaradrumgooland@dromorediocese.org .

It has not been possible to forward all messages to the new address automatically. The old one will be checked and dealt with. This may cause a delay in reply, I apologise for the inconvenience.

Positive ways to live Lent

Often we took on something extra for Lent, eg. Mass during the week, or visiting a neighbour, these are not possible this year.

Be gentle, be kind... can we be gentle and kind with the people in our home, with ourselves? There can be expectations and pressures that are beyond us at this time, reflect on what is possible.

Say sorry... have you been the bear with a sore head? With more time spent together, with less opportunities to unwind, we can get on each other's nerves, say things we regret. An apology does not wipe it away immediately, but it is a way of admitting we are human. Reach out... do we know someone that could do with a friendly phone call, or video call for the hi-tech? Maybe someone needs to hear that they are in our thoughts, that we pray for them.

Pray with someone... even one prayer with someone over the phone, we did pray together in church, can a prayer be shared in a different way?

Outdoor time... the weather may be poor but sometime spent in the beauty of God's creation and saying thank you to God for this world.

Giving something up and treats... it may be possible to combine both. Can we be grateful for the little treats of life, to those who provide them? If we do without something, we show responsibility in our choices. Choose what works for you, reflect on why it works. Lent is journeying with God in the knowledge he always journeys with us.

Weekend Masses: Sat 6:00pm Sun 9:00am

Weekday Masses: Mon 9:00am Tue 9:00am
Ash Wednesday 9:00am & 7:30pm
Fri 7:30pm

Lent with a difference

Ash Wednesday without Ashes

There can be no distribution of ashes this year. There will be two masses streamed that day, 9:00am and 7:30pm. There may be no outward symbol to others that we are journeying with God, people in need of his forgiveness, people who are freed by Jesus' death on a cross. The invite is always present, 'repent and believe in the Good News'. There is a prayer service (*see attached and <https://www.armaghprays.com/lent-2021>*), which may be used by any family, feel free to adopt it for your use.

Leitrim Chapel – the cleaning of the floors has begun. It is helpful if the floors are dry before they are resealed so the church will not be open for private prayer over the next two weeks.

Liatroim Lockdown Letters

Thank you to all the children who wrote letters, we received many beautiful letters and they have brought a lot of enjoyment to those who received them. If you received a letter and it has a return address please try to write back. You can post it back or leave it in the postbox at the old hall and we will pass it on.