

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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17th September 2023

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Tue 9:00am Dromara

Wed 7:30pm Leitrim

Fri 7:30pm Dromara

Recently Deceased

Declan O'Hare, Ringsend Road, Dromara

Pete Lundy, New Jersey, formerly Drinn



ANNIVERSARIES

LEITRIM

Sat 16th Patsy Malone
Mary Catherine & Seamus Doyle
Owen Kelly, John & Kathleen
McMullan & Deceased Family Members

Wed 20th Mena Duggan

Sat 23rd Pat McClean
Patsy Madine
John McAlarney
Bilbo Middleton

GARGORY

Sun 17th Brigid, Michael, Leonard & Liam King

Sun 24th Mark McEvoy (MM)

DROMARA

Sun 17th Barney, Cassie & Pat Cunningham
Roisin & Peter Ward
Pat & John Gordon

Fri 22nd Jim Campbell (*Dromara*)

Sun 24th Wesley Hunter
Hugh Pat O'Hare
Francis McEvoy (*Ardtanagh*)

SVP: Dromara 07738838191/Drumgooland 07825419067

Safeguarding Contact: P Carville 07789917741

Diocesan Vocations Our Seminarians, **Anthony Moffett** & **Philip McParland** have returned to St Patrick's Seminary for the new academic year. Please keep them in your prayers. We continue our prayers for further vocations. If you are considering priesthood, please contact Fr Brian Fitzpatrick on (028) 38341901 or pp.moyraverty.seagoe@gmail.com

Collections Dromara Drumgooland

Parish £735 £1,339

Priest £647 £1,534

Figures include Aug standing orders.

Thank you for your contributions.

The Gift Aid claims have been placed in the bank accounts. **Dromara £7,462.43, Drumgooland £15,627.10.** Thank you to all who signed Gift Aid forms and contribute financially to the parishes. If you wish to sign a Gift Aid form, please let us know, or if you are no longer paying tax, please let us know.

We welcome into Dromara Parish

Bonnie Mary Anketell

Leitrim Church Railings Thank you to Martin McClelland for taking on the job. *It cost £3,848.*

St Michael's Hall If anyone wishes to use the Hall, please pre-book with Mary McCann on 07854780974. If anyone needs to borrow tables, chairs or kitchen utensils, please contact Mary. There are a number of tables and teapots not returned, if you have borrowed, please check and return. Thank you.

Volunteers Needed! Every church would benefit from more volunteers, there are many roles. Reader, Eucharistic Minister, Collector, Counter, Choir, Cleaning the Chapel, Decoration of the Altar. Please consider stepping forward, a volunteer is better than a conscript. Thanks to those who have volunteered, ask a friend, sometimes that helps you step forward as well.

The Relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis will arrive in Newry Cathedral on **Sun 17th Sept** for 12 noon mass, afterwards Monsignor Figueiredo will give a talk on Blessed Carlo Acutis. Archbishop Eamon Martin will celebrate mass at 5.30pm, after which the relic will leave. Carlo died on 12th Oct 2006, aged 15. He was buried in the Basilica of St Francis of Assisi, Assisi, Italy. He was beatified on the 10th Oct 2020, two days before the 14th Anniversary of his death.

Leitrim Chapel Choir Practice Tues 19th Sept at 7pm in the Chapel. Choir practice will only be once a month, and the choir will sing at mass on Saturday evenings. We would love new people to volunteer & come to the choir (*children & adults*)

Sunday Message

24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year A • 17 September 2023 • Colour: Green • Psalter Week 4



Peter and his companions must have got a terrible shock. Peter has just asked Jesus how many times should he forgive someone. Would seven times be enough? According to Jewish tradition, God forgives three times and punishes on the fourth. Since human beings could not be more forgiving than God, forgiveness was, therefore, limited to three times.

Peter must have thought that to forgive someone seven times was being more than generous since it went way beyond what Jewish tradition taught. And certainly, to a reasonable person, seven times seems very generous indeed.

But Jesus says it is not generous enough. The Christian must forgive not seven times, but seventy times seven. In other words, Jesus is saying that the Christian must never stop forgiving. There must be no limit to our mercy and forgiveness.

Mercy, Pope Francis reminds us in his letter *Gaudete et Exsultate*, is the fulfilment of the golden rule: "In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you."

"Giving and forgiving," explains Pope Francis, "means reproducing in our lives some small measure of God's perfection, which gives and forgives superabundantly."

Note the word 'superabundant.' The bigness of it, the extraordinary excess of it, the extravagant nature of it. God gives and forgives superabundantly. God gives and forgives without limit. God's mercy abounds and expands like the universe.

That's how we are called to live. To forgive - not once, not twice, not even 70 times - but today and tomorrow and everyday. To show mercy - not occasionally, not when we feel like it, not when we're coaxed or coerced into doing it, but today and tomorrow and everyday.

As Christians, we must always seek to forgive and to be forgiven. ■

PRAY

To forgive someone who has hurt us or betrayed us badly can be very difficult. Pray for the strength always to try to forgive.

LEARN

Forgiveness is at the heart of Jesus' message

For the follower of Jesus, there can be no limit to mercy and forgiveness

Forgiveness sets us free

SAY

"The Lord is compassion and love."



DO

Confession is the wonderful celebration of God's forgiveness, which sets us free. How long is it since you have been to confession? Perhaps you could consider going this week.

REFLECT

It took Gary Ridgway nearly 20 years to be brought to justice. Ridgway, from Seattle in the USA, was a serial killer who told police he was missing the part of humanity that makes people care about others.

By the time he was caught, he had murdered at least 49 women, including a 16-year-old called Linda Rule. For years Linda's father, Robert, and her family sought justice for Linda. Finally, in 2003, Ridgway was arrested.

In court, Ridgway remained cold and without remorse. One by one, his victims' loved ones spoke from their hearts,

expressing their contempt for the killer sitting before them. The courtroom was full of anger and pain, understandably so. But the bespectacled Ridgway sat unmoved. The judge lambasted him for his "complete absence of compassion."

Then it was Robert Rule's turn to address the court. Rule was old by now; he worked as a Santa at a shopping centre and he looked the part. Plump, with a big white beard, he wore a pair of brightly coloured braces for his day in court. While family members of other victims had sobbed or screamed or wished death on Ridgway, Rule was composed as he faced his daughter's killer. What he said surprised everyone, including the cold-hearted murderer.

"Mr Ridgway, um," he began, "there are people here who hate you. I'm not one of them. I forgive you for what you've done. You've made it difficult to live up to what I believe, and that is what God says to do, and that's to forgive. And he doesn't say to forgive just certain people. He says to forgive all. So you are forgiven, sir."

As the father spoke, Ridgway's chin began to quiver. He blinked rapidly. He started to weep. And then he took off his glasses to wipe the tears. Robert Rule's words of forgiveness got to Gary Ridgway's heart in a way no other words could.

That's the power of forgiveness. As Robert Rule demonstrated, and as Gary Ridgway discovered, forgiveness sets us free. ■