

Sunday Message

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WORD

Year A • 26 March 2023 • Colour: Violet • Psalter Week 1



BEING SET FREE JOHN 11:1-45

Today's Gospel is the famous story of the restoration of Lazarus to life. Lazarus, a friend of Jesus, is ill. His sisters ask Jesus to come to see him. But Jesus delays a while. By the time he finally arrives, Lazarus has already been in the tomb for four days.

Jesus gathers Martha, Mary, his disciples, and some friends who had come to console the grieving sisters, around Lazarus' tomb. He works a sign to show that he is the "resurrection and the life." He asks that the stone sealing the tomb be removed. Then he prays and bids Lazarus to come out. Still in his burial clothes, Lazarus comes out; he has been restored to life. Then Jesus orders them: "Unbind him. Set him free." And they do. And he is.

Lazarus is unbound; freed from the bonds of death and all that was binding him up; he can now get on with living. Thanks to the power of Jesus.

Today's Gospel encourages us to think about what might be binding us up, keeping us from being fully alive, keeping us from being set free.

There are so many ways we can feel bound up and unfree.

We can be bound up in a sense of our own sinfulness, thinking that we are not good enough before God. Some people suffer from terrible scruples about the most insignificant transgressions.

We can be bound up in an addiction of some kind – to drink, drugs, porn, gambling – from which there can seem to be no escape.

We can be bound up in poor self-esteem, thinking we don't measure up, wrapped up in a sense of our own unworthiness, full of self-pity and quiet despair.

We can be bound up in a terrible anger – at someone close to us, at the church, at God, maybe at ourselves and our circumstances – that eats away at us.

We can be bound up in a dead routine – doing the same things day after day, feeling trapped, unfulfilled, and stifled.

Lent is a season that invites us to look at what binds us up. It is an invitation to look at what keeps us from being fully ourselves, fully alive, fully authentic, the kind of people God wants us to be – and to invite God in.

Jesus is the Lord of life. He wants to free us from all that burdens us. He wants to unbind us from all that prevents us from being our best selves, as he unbound Lazarus and set him free. ■

REFLECT

One way of being unbound, set free, is by going to confession. It is something we could consider this Lent. Having someone we can confide in is important too – a partner, friend, counsellor. And our God is one in whom we can confide, at any time, and free of charge. Talking, confessing, and letting things out is a wonderful way to unburden.

Jesus is our great liberator. He is the resurrection and the life. He sets us free. He frees us even from the chains of death itself. All we need to do is to turn to him. ■



LEARN

Our God is a God of life – not of death

The Christian believes in the resurrection of the dead. This is at the core of our faith

The Christian is opposed to anything that is not life-giving

DO

Examine your life. How deeply do you value the gift of life you have received? What bad habits or practices might you need to change?

SAY

Repeat the words of Martha from today's Gospel: "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into this world."

PRAY

Pray for your deceased loved ones and the deceased members of this local community. Give thanks for their lives. Ask the Lord of life to take them to himself.

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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26th March 2023

5th Sunday of Lent

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 Leitrim
Fri 7:30pm Dromara

Recently deceased James Malone, Leitrim Road

Anniversaries

Dechomet

Sat 25th Patrick Hugh Morgan
Sadie McGreevy
Sat 1st Stephen McElroy

Leitrim

Sat 25th Maura Murphy
Eugene McMullan
Mon 27th Willie, Sarah, Hugh and Sean Lavery
Tommy Fitzpatrick
Wed 29th Martin McDonald
Sat 1st James Gerard Kelly
Kathleen Cunningham

Gargory

Sun 26th Patrick McAleenan

Dromara

Sun 26th Art Gilmore
Joe Connolly
Sun 2nd Julia McCann
Stephen O'Hare

Diocesan Knock Pilgrimage

The Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Knock will take place on Sat 3rd Jun. Anyone wishing to attend please leave your name and contact details in the parochial house. Further details will be available in the coming weeks.

SVDP: Drom 07738838191/Drumg 07825419067

Safeguarding Contact: P Carville 07789917741

Collections

	Dromara	Drumgooland
Parish	£461	£682
Priest	£664	£1845
Sick & Retired Priests	£245	£508

Confirmations

St Matthew's Tues 28th March 6:30pm
St Michael's Wed 29th March 6:00pm
St Mary's Fri 31st March 6:00pm

Confessions

Mon 3rd Apr Dechomet 6:45 – 7:15pm
Tues 4th Apr Dromara 6:45 – 7:15pm
Wed 5th Apr Leitrim 6:45 – 7:15pm
Sat 8th Apr Gargory 10:00 – 10:30am

Easter Bingo

Please join the 'Friends of St Michael's Parents Group' on Sun 2nd April at 3pm for a great afternoon of bingo in the Parish Hall. Doors open at 2:30pm. £100 JACKPOT must go! Great Easter Raffle, so please come along and show your support for the school.

Dromore Diocesan Lourdes 50th Jubilee Pilgrimage 17th – 22nd May 2023

The cost is £750.00. This includes general insurance cover (to include Covid 19), transport to/from airports, full board accommodation, a programme of ceremonies in Lourdes, assistance of travel agent representatives in Lourdes (further details available on booking form). Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we will not be using the hospital accommodation (Accueil) in Lourdes and will therefore be unable to support an assisted section in 2023. This means we will not have support from doctors, nurses, and volunteers as we had pre-pandemic. There is only 1 aircraft (189 seats) and bookings will be accepted on first come basis. This means a properly completed booking form and deposit (£150 non-refundable) must be submitted to secure booking. If you are interested in travelling to Lourdes as a pilgrim please contact Sean Gorman Tel: (028) 3026 3739 for further details.

Gargory Altar Rota April - Marion