

Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year C • Season Colour: Red • Psalter Week 2

JESUS' FINAL TEST

(LUKE 22:14-23:56)



At the beginning of the Gospel narrative, we saw Jesus tested as to how he understands being the Son of God. Luke ended his account with the ominous words that “the devil left him, to return at the appointed time”.

During the Last Supper, he tells us that “Satan entered into Judas” and was also seeking to challenge Simon Peter. So the scene is set for the final test of Jesus as the Son of God.

Throughout his account, Luke has presented the disciples in a more positive light than Mark, and this more sympathetic view persists throughout the Passion narrative, which we hear read today. The male disciples are not described as fleeing the scene when Jesus is arrested and may well be included among those who witness the Crucifixion.

Luke's version is much more gentle and understanding of the complexity facing the characters in the story. Jesus' message of healing and reconciliation continues right up to the end: Pilate and the soldiers do not make fun of Jesus; there is no crown of thorns; the crowd of Jewish people following Jesus on his way to Calvary, not all of whom are disciples, are presenting as “lamenting his fate”. Jesus speaks sympathetically to the “Daughters of Jerusalem”. He prays for forgiveness for those responsible for his being executed on political charges, perhaps not only those who actually carry out the dreadful deed, but also those who engineered it, the chief priest and scribes who did not realise what they were actually doing. ■

LEARN

‘The Agony in the Garden’ is more accurately expressed as ‘Jesus’ Struggle in Gethsemane’.

Luke describes the individuals sentenced to death with Jesus as “criminals”, not “thieves”.

Each evangelist tells the story of Jesus from his own understanding and point of view:

This is why Jesus' final words on the cross are different: Luke has “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”, whereas Mark has “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

DO

Take your palm cross in your hand: think about these points from this year's reading from the Passion according to Luke.



SAY

Into your hands, Lord, I commit my spirit and myself.

(see Luke 23:46)

REFLECT

Many people find Luke's Gospel version the one they prefer. One of the reasons may be that the Third Evangelist shows Jesus and his teaching as most understanding of human nature and the issues which confront us. The Passion narrative brings many of these themes together. We have noted how we can see that Jesus continues to reconcile people who have been at odds with one another. He urges those bewailing his fate to think of themselves and their families. At the very

end, he comforts the criminal (who is not described as a ‘thief’, let alone a ‘good thief’), who turns to him and asks him to remember him. Finally, his last words are of confidence, entrusting his spirit, himself, to the mercy of God.

Some years ago, there was a film entitled *The Last Temptation of Christ*. This presentation focussed on the Passion of Jesus and, perhaps unwittingly, the title captured the true meaning of this episode. If we understand ‘temptation’

as ‘test’, then we can see that Jesus is being challenged to avoid what is in store for him, to take the easier way and to escape while there is still time. That is why it is better to understand ‘The Agony in the Garden’ as ‘The Struggle in Gethsemane’: Jesus is once again confronted with what it means to be the Son of God. Eventually, this is expressed in the cross. Will Jesus accept this or take the alternative way? Luke gives us the answer. ■

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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Palm Sunday – 10th April 2022

Weekend masses

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

Masses for Holy Week

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

Holy Thursday

Chrism Mass in Newry Cathedral at 10:30am

(watch online via the newrycathedralparish.org webcam)

6pm Dromara 7:30pm Leitrim

Good Friday Stations of the Cross at 3pm in

Dechomet, Dromara & Leitrim

Evening Service 6pm Dromara 7:30pm Gargory

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil 9pm Leitrim

Easter Sunday 9am Gargory 10am Leitrim
11am Dromara 12noon Dechomet

Stations of the Cross will not be streamed but hopefully all other services will be streamed.

Easter Holy Water will be blessed on Holy Saturday evening and at all masses on Easter Sunday.

I only have a few empty bottles so please bring a filled bottle with you and it will be blessed.

Anniversary Masses

Dechomet

Sat 9th Patrick Hugh and Elizabeth Doyle
John Sweeney

Mon 11th Patrick and Mary Doyle (Dechomet)
Fr Willie Doyle

Leitrim

Sat 9th John and Agnes Boyd
Deceased Members of the Cowan Family
Margaret and Teresa Murphy

Dromara

Sun 10th Gerry and Cissie O'Hare
Sun 17th Kathleen McMahan

Cemetery Sunday 22nd May

Congratulations to all the children who were confirmed during the past week. Thank you to them, their families and the schools for creating prayerful atmospheres.

We welcome into Dromara Parish Clodagh O'Hare and Kevin Doyle

Confessions

Mon 11th 6:45-7:15pm Dechomet
Tues 12th 6:45-7:30pm Dromara
Wed 13th 6:45-7:30pm Leitrim
Sat 16th 10-10:30am Gargory

Confessions will be in the front seat, please wear a face covering.

Collections

	Dromara	Drumgooland
Parish	£1422	£1629
Priests	£1072	£1524

Ukraine Collection

This week £6,196 was passed onto Caritas International as a result of your huge generosity. Any more donations received will be passed on after Easter.

Trócaire

This year Trócaire has once more gained matched funding, which means that your gift will be doubled. Please return any donations from the weekend 23rd/24th onwards.

Easter Choir Practice

St Michael's Church, Finnis, Wed 13th at 6pm.
Children and their families especially welcome.

Leitrim Cleaners Fri 15th Geraldine's Team

NI Blood Transfusion Service

Blood donation session:

Wed 20th Apr 12:30pm-4:00pm and 5:00pm-7:30pm
in St Malachy's High School, Castlewellan,
Booking by appointment only.

Please phone 08085 534653