

# Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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## Third Sunday of Advent

15<sup>th</sup> December 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 Leitrim  
Fri 7:30pm Dromara

### Confession for Christmas

Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Dromara 6:30pm - 7:15pm  
Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Leitrim 6:45pm - 7:15pm  
Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> Dechomet 6:45pm - 7:15pm  
Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> Leitrim 8:00pm - 8:30pm  
Tues 24<sup>th</sup> Gargory 10:00am - 10:30am

### Christmas Masses

Christmas Eve 6pm Dromara 7:15pm Leitrim  
8:30pm Gargory 9:45pm Dechomet  
Christmas Day 9am Gargory 10am Leitrim  
11am Dromara

### Recently deceased



*Sr Mary Cunningham, Assumption Convent  
Bernadette Quinn, Aughlisnafin*

### ANNIVERSARIES

#### Leitrim

Sat 14<sup>th</sup> Patrick Smyth  
Barney & Agnes Morgan  
McMullan Family (*Legananny*)  
Wed 18<sup>th</sup> Patsy Bannon  
Joe McCrickard  
Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Patricia O'Prey  
Brendan Cunningham

#### Dromara

Sun 15<sup>th</sup> Canon Gerry McCrory  
Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> Christopher O'Hare  
Mary & Gerard McGrillen  
Peter, Eileen, Catherine & Bernard  
O'Hare & Deceased Family Members

#### Dechomet

Sat 21<sup>st</sup> John Greeran  
William James Doyle

### SVP contact numbers

Drom 077 3883 8191 / Drumg 078 2541 9067

### Collections Dromara Drumgooland

Parish	£889	£1,835
Priest	£731	£1,405

*Figures include Nov standing orders*

*Thank you for continuing to support your parish*

### Recent painting costs

Railings, lamp posts & gates at  
Gargory & Dechomet £2,439

Parochial House exterior walls £4,108

This work was undertaken by Martin McClelland

**St Mary's Choir rehearsal** this evening,  
**Sat 14<sup>th</sup>**, after Mass

### St Mary's PS, Dechomet

**Christmas Carol Service Tues 17<sup>th</sup> Dec**  
10am & 6pm in St Mary of the Angels Church

*We welcome into Drumgooland Parish  
Conan James Ward*

Please enter 'The Friends of St Michael's Finnis Parents Group' Cash Call. Prize £500. Enter preferably via PayPal (select friends and family) or you can send money into the School with your name and mobile number. <https://www.paypal.me/FOSM1964>  
1 entry £10 or 3 for £20. The call will be made on **Wed 18<sup>th</sup> Dec at 5pm**. Caller must be over 18 and must answer within 5 rings. Good luck!

### Hospice Gift Certificates

Looking for the perfect Christmas gift?  
Get your loved ones the gift that gives twice with our Southern Area Hospice gift certificates!  
Also available are our teacher and classroom assistant gift certificates for that special teacher. With a minimum donation of just £5 you can help make a difference this Christmas. Available to purchase from the Hospice reception or by calling 028 3026 7711.

### St Vincent de Paul Finnis, Dromara Christmas Appeal 2024

An **Amazon Wish List** had been setup for anyone who wishes to purchase a Christmas present for a local child to receive this Christmas. Any support no matter how small is greatly appreciated and will go directly to support local families in need of support.

The **Wish List** can be found at:

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1RET2PL08GHHT?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/1RET2PL08GHHT?ref=wl_share)

If you have any difficulties, or if you would prefer to make a donation towards heating oil/food hampers please contact Mary on 07738838191.  
Many thanks for your continued support.

# Sunday Message

3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE WORD

Year C • 15 December 2024 • Colour: Rose or Violet • Psalter Week 3

## TO POINT TOWARDS JESUS

LK 3:10-18



As we move closer to Christmas the excitement and anticipation is growing.

In our families and in the work place Christmas may well have already arrived with parties and nativity plays in full swing. It is hard to hold onto this precious time of preparation. This is not new. People were so excited by the way John the Baptist spoke that they almost stopped hearing what he had to say and began to think that he was the messiah.

The first reading echoes this excitement, as Zephaniah announces the imminent arrival of the one who will bring love and joy to Israel.

The Baptist is anxious to curb the enthusiasm of those who are beginning to think he is the messiah. He knows only too well that he is merely an instrument of God, whose job is to proclaim the arrival of the Good News. In fact, he is not even worthy to undo the sandal of the one who is coming.

Like John the Baptist, our task also is to point towards Jesus. ■

### DO

Reflect on the times when you elevate yourself or believe that what you have to do is more important than putting Jesus first.

### SAY

"Lord, let me decrease so that you may increase in me. Amen."

### LEARN

The Christian always points towards Christ

Today is known as Gaudete Sunday, meaning 'rejoice,' from the first word of the entrance antiphon

The Christian always speaks truth to power

### PRAY

Pray for all who work in any form of religious ministry that their lives will truly witness to Christ and bring others closer to him.

## REFLECT

John the Baptist teaches us several lessons. The first is about the need to be authentic. When John began to preach, people flocked to him from everywhere, impressed by his words, his charisma, his message. Even the upper classes came to him. It must have been tempting for John to feel like a celebrity, a kind of messiah. But he resists. He is constantly at pains to push the focus away from himself. He has no desire to be the centre of attention. "Someone greater is coming after me," he says, "and I'm not fit to carry his sandals."

The people see him as a prophet, but John is no narcissist. He's not interested in fame or appearances. He remains his authentic self.

Some years ago, a young American commentator Jia Tolentino published an essay entitled 'Always be Optimising.' It's about the pressure women feel to look good, be attractive, skinny, appealing. The need to always be optimising; in other words, to never be satisfied with their appearance. It's not only women who feel this pressure. Young men feel it increasingly too.

Today's world pressurises us to be seen as successful, with a rewarding career and good income, a perfect family and a nice

house. To always be optimising. Social media, with its obsession with looks and money and celebrity, makes being your authentic self even harder. Image trumps integrity, honesty, authenticity.

And this pressure costs. It can eat into our self-esteem. We can become damaged, dispirited, disappointed. We forget that God created us in God's own image and likeness and God never creates failures. John the Baptist knew that. He always remained his authentic self. Authentic self-love is not selfish or narcissistic; it's never self-obsessed or egotistical. It's acknowledging the beauty and abilities we have in abundance, nurturing them, using them well. The Baptist urges us to be authentic.

Second, John the Baptist always pointed towards Jesus, and away from himself. Everything he said and did directed people towards Jesus. So it must be with us.

This is peak sales and marketing season. Huge sums will be spent creating memorable, heart-warming, advertisements, encouraging us to spend, spend, spend. John the Baptist reminds us that Christians are advertisers also. Our lives must be everyday advertisements for the Gospel, walking billboards that point to Christ, by the kind of people we are and the witness we give. Each of us, like the Baptist, must point to Jesus every day.

Third, John the Baptist challenges us to witness to our faith without fear. Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister says that our model must be both Jesus the healer and Jesus the prophet. The popular embrace of Jesus the healer, she says, has obscured the more radical Jesus, who challenged the status quo and religious leaders of his time.

"We live in an era that accepts half of what it means to follow Jesus," she says. "We want our religion in a spiritual Jacuzzi, a feel-good spiritual world."

She warns that we are at a time when huge choices must be made that will determine the future of the world. Choice takes three forms. The first is avoidance and to withdraw from the fray. The second is submission and passive acceptance, to not talk about religion or politics or justice and "become part of the great enabling silence." The third is to be prophetic, to refuse to accept the status quo. This prophetic choice says 'no' to anything that ignores the will of God or God's creation.

John the Baptist chose option number three - to be prophetic. He called out injustice, he challenged people to change their ways. He was martyred for it. Like the Baptist, we also must be courageous witnesses to the truth, whatever the consequences. ■