

Sunday Message

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year A • 22 January 2023 • Colour: Green • Psalter Week 3



CALLED TO FOLLOW

(MT 4:12-23)

The arrest of John signalled Jesus out as a marked man. He left the Jordan valley and returned to his home country of Galilee. But not quite. He didn't go back to home and family in Nazareth, to familiar job and surroundings. He went instead to a town called Capernaum.

Today, Capernaum is a few acres of ruins on the shores of the lake of Galilee, while Nazareth is a bustling town of thousands of inhabitants. In the days of Jesus, it was different. Nazareth was an isolated mountain hamlet, Capernaum a busy port on an international trading route, which Matthew and the prophet Isaiah long before him knew as 'The Way of the Sea'.

The extended Jewish family provided a total care system. It gave a comforting familiarity to life, but there was a price to pay. No doubt there were family pressures on Jesus to be like everyone else – to settle down, build up the family carpentry business, pick a nice local girl and get married. If he conformed, his place in the system was assured.

Jesus, on the other hand, needs to get away. His sense of mission will not allow him to settle down like all the rest. In Capernaum, Jesus sets about forming a new group around himself. There must have been something magnetic about his personality to make people leave what they knew to follow him. Matthew tells us in the last lines of today's Gospel why Jesus needs space and freedom. It is so that the Good News of the Kingdom and its healing can be proclaimed. ■

SAY

Lord, thank you for inviting me to follow you. Help me to follow you every day of my life.

DO

Reflect on what it means to you to be a follower of Jesus. How closely do you follow him? How much would you be prepared to give up to follow him?

PRAY

Pray for Christians persecuted for their faith.

LEARN

A disciple is one who follows.

The Christian is called to follow Jesus whatever the cost.

As baptised Christians, each of us is obliged to proclaim the Gospel.

REFLECT

Question: Who or what do you follow?

Today's Gospel is about following. Jesus calls his first disciples, and they drop everything and follow him. They abandon everything to follow him. They leave behind their families, jobs, and old way of life and follow this charismatic street preacher. It seems like a reckless thing to do. And yet these pairs of brothers do it.

Imagine doing something like that today – giving up all you're familiar with to follow someone? Giving up all you are familiar with to follow Jesus?

But lots of people still do it. Religious vocations may not be as plentiful as in the past, but some young people still choose to dedicate their lives entirely to God, ministering either at home or overseas. They have dropped everything to follow Jesus.

Unlike these 'professional' religious, we don't have to drop everything and follow – but we are called to follow. We all become followers of Jesus through our baptism and are called to follow him faithfully every day. We do that by loving God and each other as best we can; by serving God and each other as best we can. By trying to be good people.

On social media, you can unfollow someone if you like. You can also give up following a particular political party or celebrity, or even a sports team if they disappoint you too much.

But for us Christians, the challenge is never to give up following Jesus. That, even when we stumble and fail, we pick ourselves up and follow him again; that, even when the church lets us down, we don't let its weakness stop us from honouring our baptismal calling. That no matter what trials or setbacks come our way, we never stop following Jesus.

So that question again: Who do you follow? Do you follow Jesus as fervently as your local rugby or football team? Or your favourite soap? How dedicated a Christian are you? ■

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

Fr Peter McNeill Tel: 406 50207 Emergency Tel: 079 69403762

Email: dromaradrumgooland@dmorediocese.org Web: www.dromaradrumgooland.org

22nd January 2023
3rd 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 **7:00pm Dechomet**
Tues 9:00am Dromara
Wed 7:30pm Leitrim
Fri 7:30pm Dromara

Recently deceased

Tom Toman, Loughisland
Patsy McGrillen, England, formerly Dromara

Anniversaries

Dromara

Sun 22nd Kathleen, John & Sarah Gordon
Fri 27th Winnie & Gerry Dunniece
Sun 29th Eileen & Paddy Dillon
Frank, Mary & Patrick Galbraith

Dechomet

Sat 28th Ellie Morgan (MM)
Mickey Turley

Leitrim

Sat 28th Henry & Rita O'Hare
Margaret Blaney
John Anthony Cunningham
Evelyn Clarke

Cemetery Sunday 21st May 2023

SVDP

A member of the National Executive will speak at the 11am mass in Dromara on Sun 29th Jan, about the work of SVDP

SVDP If you are struggling with food/heating bills, etc., please contact us: Dromara 077 3883 8191 or Drumgooland 078 2541 9067

St Vincent de Paul Finnis, Dromara would like to thank everyone who kindly contributed to this year's Christmas Appeal and give donations. Your continued support and generosity is much appreciated, and helped ensure no child went without a present at Christmas.

If anyone urgently needs support please contact 07738838191.

Safeguarding contact: P Carville 077 8991 7741

Services of Light - Preparation for Confirmation

St Mary's Mon 23rd 7:30pm
St Michael's Tues 24th 7:30pm
St Matthew's Tues 31st 7:30pm

Collections Parish	Dromara	Drumgooland
	£545	£601

Feast Days of the week

Tues 24th St Francis de Sales - Bishop of Geneva, founder of the Visitation Sisters

Wed 25th St Paul - Preached the power of God at work in the lives of each one of us

Thur 26th Sts. Timothy & Titus - Timothy the first Bishop of Ephesus. Titus was sent to organise the Church in Crete

Fri 27th St Angela Merici - Devoted herself to Christian education based on love, kindness with firmness, and concern for the individual

Sat 28th St Thomas Aquinas - Patron of Schools, Universities, Students and Booksellers

Southern Area Hospice Services

Chaplain Vacancies

The SAHS currently has two vacancies for Chaplain positions, one is a permanent 21-hour position and the other temporary 10-hour position to September 2023.

Both roles will support the Inpatient Unit in Newry as well as Community Services, which cover the Southern Trust geographical area. Applicants must have a relevant degree (i.e., Theology) along with experience of working in a health care, parish, or community setting.

Closing date 5pm Jan 23rd

Further details available on SAHS website:

www.southernareahospiceservices.org/chaplain

Anam Cara Armagh, the organisation that supports bereaved parents, is holding a Parent Evening for bereaved parents on Wed 25th Jan at 7:15pm in Armagh City Hotel. This event is free and open to all bereaved parents regardless of the age your child died, the circumstances of their death, or whether their death was recent or not. We also offer an online support service. Contact us on info@anamcara.ie or 028 95213120 for any queries.