

# Stu( )space

SERIES: POINTERS ON THE JOURNEY

Season colour: GREEN

In this series, **Gerard Moloney, C.Ss.R** reflects on the Gospel in the context of today.

Today's Gospel describes the return of the Twelve whom Jesus sent out on mission. After they return, Jesus suggests they go away to a deserted place to recover, reflect and pray. Time apart in a deserted place will help the Twelve to understand more fully the mission they now share with him.

So Jesus and his disciples set out across the Sea of Galilee by boat. But the plan fails spectacularly. Seeing the boat, people recognise who the passengers are and race around the lake to meet Jesus and the disciples when they reach land. Mark says that the people came "from all the towns" around the lake. This is his way of letting us know just how popular Jesus was.

Mark says that Jesus "had compassion on them." In Greek the text reads that "he was moved with compassion for them in his inward parts." In the Hebrew way of associating feelings to parts of the body, compassion was always associated with the womb. In the case of men, it was the intestine. While that may seem strange to us, it means that when Jesus sees the people gathered, he has such compassion for them that he feels it in the pit of his stomach. It's a really strong statement of the degree of feeling Jesus has for the people.

His reason for such a strong feeling is that the people "were like sheep without a shepherd." This phrase is used in the Old Testament to describe the people of Israel whenever they suffered from failed or negligent leadership. But Jesus will not fail and he will not neglect God's people. He will be the true shepherd.

with those on the margins – sinners, prostitutes, diseased, outcasts – to stress that nobody was excluded from God's love. He washed feet, a demeaning task reserved for servants and slaves. He died a failure. All Jesus said and did pointed to a new way of living in accord with God's vision of a kingdom of justice, love and peace. To act justly is key to Jesus's vision.

It's unfortunate that Catholics and non-Catholics alike tend to be more familiar with what the Church teaches about sex than with what it teaches about social justice. But the church has formulated a wonderful body of teaching on social justice, stretching back to Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891. This teaching embraces issues from workers' rights to the dangers of unregulated capitalism, from care for the politically and economically oppressed to opposition to capital punishment. In 2015, Pope Francis published the first papal encyclical devoted to the environment, placing care for the earth as a central tenet of the Church's mission.

The biblical emphasis on God's care for the poor and for all creation is the basis for the church's focus on social issues and for its pro-life stance. In his letter *Gaudete et Exsultate*, Pope Francis stresses the need to protect the unborn. He goes on to say: "Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection."

What Pope Francis is saying is that God's justice and compassion extends from womb to tomb.

Jesus ached with compassion for all who suffered. Following the example of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, we also look with compassion on those who need our help.

We seek to ease their burdens. ■

## 130 YEARS SINCE RERUM NOVARUM

Care for the poor and oppressed was central to Jesus's life and ministry. He identified with the poor. He was born in poverty in an obscure town of a colonised country. He mixed



## GOD'S WORD TODAY

The disciples are so busy proclaiming the Gospel that they don't have time to eat! The crowds are so hungry for Jesus' words that they stay all day without eating. There can be no Church without the proclamation of the Word of God. Similarly there can be no Church without compassionate care for others. The Gospel story also reminds us that compassionate care for others, especially the suffering, is as crucial to being Catholic as is hearing the Word of God.



## Today's readings

Jer 23:1-6  
Eph 2:13-18  
Mk 6:30-34

## TO ACHE WITH COMPASSION

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# Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

Fr Peter McNeill Tel: 406 50207 Email: [dromaradrumgooland@dromorediocese.org](mailto:dromaradrumgooland@dromorediocese.org) Web: [www.dromaradgooland.org](http://www.dromaradgooland.org)

## 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – 18<sup>th</sup> July 2021

### The Prophets

**Amos** - he begins his prophetic career around 760BC. He is from outside Jerusalem but is sent to the Northern Kingdom, often referred to as Israel. The Kingdom had witnessed an upsurge of trade, military power, building programmes and material prosperity but this is accompanied by merciless oppression of the poor. There had been constant attempts to combine traditional religions with local canonite practices. They do not have access to the temple in Jerusalem and many shrines are built, but not always to God and God alone.

Amos was a country shepherd and a dresser of trees, a man from a poor background, so he easily speaks of neglect of the poor. He is a reluctant prophet, not a professional, often the kings had professional prophets, who lived for 'profit'. They told the King what he wanted to hear or what would be to their advantage.

Amos says that their traditional enemies will suffer, God will punish the transgressors. Yet he will also punish his people who have exploited their own, who would sell the needy for a pair of sandals or keep a cloak for a pledge, leaving the poor with nothing. The people are to 'seek me and live', to move from empty sacrifices, especially to false Gods. He promises that the 'Day of the Lord' will come.

**Hosea** - he was a prophet at the same time as Amos, but he was from the North. He speaks of God's love as 'one who marries their beloved and does not remove that love even if the spouse is unfaithful'. This image of the faithful God and a

people, Israel, who has given themselves to other gods, taken part in false worship, fertility rites and many practices that do not fit with faithful love. Yet God does not withdraw His love. He remembers the ones He sought and courted, He invites them back. Yet they must repent, they must show that they understand the error of their ways. In another passage he speaks of God teaching his child to walk, holding the child close to his cheek. A loving parent knows the child will stumble as they learn to walk, the leading strings of love but they will also know that rejection of love is painful. The call is to return to God, change their ways. Do not put your trust in foreign powers, in gods that do not exist, in the safety of wealth and power. The King would not listen and the Northern Kingdom fell to Assyria.

### Anniversary Masses

#### Leitrim

Sun 17<sup>th</sup> Brian Donnelly

Sat 24<sup>th</sup> John Love (MM)

#### Dromara

Sun 18<sup>th</sup> Laurence Colgan

Maureen McKey

Sun 25<sup>th</sup> Hugh Pat McEvoy

#### Gargory

Sun 25<sup>th</sup> Mick McGreevy

### Collections <sup>11<sup>th</sup> July</sup> Parish Educ Priests

|             |      |      |
|-------------|------|------|
| Dromara     | £293 | £135 |
| Drumgooland | £701 | £449 |

**We welcome** into Drumgooland Parish Lorcán Doyle and into Dromara Parish Erin Pulford

### There will be no Weekday Masses this week

#### Weekend masses

Sat 6:00pm Dechomet

7:30pm Leitrim

Sun 9:00am Gargory

11:00am Dromara

I will be on holiday from Sun 18<sup>th</sup> Jul (after mass) until Sat 7<sup>th</sup> Aug. If there are any emergency sick calls or deaths, please try Fr Brian Brown (074 9673 1619). (I turn my mobile phone off on holiday).

### Proposed changes to guidance about church attendance due to come into place Mon 26<sup>th</sup> Jul

The 2m social distance will be reduced to 1m in a church setting. Face coverings will no longer be compulsory in church after that date. The change in social distance space will not be introduced into the parishes until the weekend I return, 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Aug. Many people have expressed a concern about the non-wearing of face coverings. Please feel free to continue wearing face coverings whilst in the church, it does help to protect others and therefore yourself. I strongly encourage people to wear them; especially as we begin the adjustment which will allow more people to attend mass. The help of Eucharistic Ministers will be very welcome. If the Eucharistic Ministers let their coordinator know if they are comfortable to take up this role again. It will take time for things to settle down, please be patient with yourself and with others during change.