

LOST AND FOUND

(LUKE 2:41-52)



Nativity scene from front façade of the Cathedral of St Wenceslas in Olomouc, Czech Republic

The colourful and poignant episode which we find in our Gospel reading today is only recounted in the Gospel of Luke. The evangelist uses it as a bridge between the account of the birth of Jesus and the beginning of his adult ministry.

He emphasises the religious observance of the couple described as “the parents of Jesus”, who were accustomed to making an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem in order to celebrate the feast of Passover. On this occasion, the twelve-year old Jesus decided to remain behind without informing them. They discover him in the Temple, teaching the teachers.

In spite of all the information which they have received, which we have considered over the Christmas period, about the nature of the child to be born, Mary and Joseph fail to understand Jesus’ rather enigmatic reply to his mother’s relieved but exasperated question, “Why have you done this to us? See how anxious your father and I have been, looking for you.” He answers, rather abruptly, about being “busy with my Father’s affairs”. This failure to understand what Jesus says will recur in the Gospel narrative.

This incident is bracketed by notices about Jesus growing up in Nazareth: we are told first that “he grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and God’s favour was on him.” This wisdom is illustrated in his discussions with the teachers of the Law in the Temple. After that Jesus “went down with them then and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority.” Jesus’ human nature is very much emphasised in these passages. ■

REFLECT

Today, a child of twelve is embarking on secondary school. At the time of Jesus, a boy of twelve was probably considered able to undertake adult responsibility in religious matters and to be responsible for any vow he might make. So this story is not simply about a lost child. Only a parent can fully understand the feelings of Mary and Joseph on discovering that Jesus was missing from the company with whom they were travelling.

This story is highly charged from an emotional point of view. There is a missing child: a frantic search by anxious parents; the eventual relief at discovering that the boy is safe and sound; the perplexity at his precocious talent in holding an apparently impressive discussion with well-qualified experts in their own field. Then there is the first indication that the adolescent has a mind of his or her own, that they sense a calling of which their parents have no inkling or understanding, but the family relationship continues until the appropriate time.

To be a married person, a parent, is just as much a vocation as to be a priest or religious sister or brother, and just as demanding – or more so. This feast reminds us that most Christians are called to be committed partners in marriage and parenthood, and should be honoured as such. Like Mary, maybe we should “store up all these things in our hearts”. ■

SAY

Blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

(Psalm 127:1)

LEARN

The average age of people at the time of Jesus was probably 40 years.

A boy (sic) of twelve was considered able to undertake adult religious responsibilities.

The depiction of Joseph as an elderly man has no basis in the Gospel tradition.

DO

Put out your crib figures of Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus. Reflect that most Christians are called to live out our faith as married and family members.



Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

Fr Peter McNeill Tel: 406 50207 Emergency Tel: 079 69403762
Email: dromaradrumgooland@dromorediocese.org Web: www.dromaradrumgooland.org

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph – 26th December 2021

Masses this incoming week

Sun 26th 9:00am Gargory 10:00am Leitrim
11:00am Dromara 12noon Dechomet

There will be no weekday mass on 27th, 28th or 29th

Fri 31st 10:00am Leitrim
Sat 1st 10:00am Gargory 11:00am Dromara
6:00pm Dechomet 7:30pm Leitrim
Sun 2nd 9:00am Gargory 11:00am Dromara
Mon 3rd 9:00am Leitrim 7:30pm Dechomet
Tues 4th 9:00am Dromara

Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany:

Wed 5th 7:30pm Leitrim & Thur 6th 7:30pm Dromara

Fri 7th 7:30pm Dromara

I will be available for any sick call or emergency in the days after Christmas.

Weekend masses

Sat 8th 6:00pm Dechomet 7:30pm Leitrim
Sun 9th 9:00am Gargory 11:00am Dromara

I will be on holiday Sat 8th Jan – Sun 15th Jan

There will be no weekday masses 10th – 14th Jan

Recently deceased Very Rev Gerald McCrory P.E.,
Ballynahinch

Anniversary Masses

Leitrim

Sun 26th Bernard Owens, Loretta Owens and
Elaine Morgan
Fri 31st Patricia O'Prey; Winnifred McCrickard
Sat 1st Edward H and Rosaleen Ward

Dromara

Sun 26th Christopher O'Hare
Peter and Eileen, Bernard and Catherine
O'Hare and Deceased Family Members
Sun 2nd Jimmy and Winnie McEvoy
Tue 4th Dariush Mehrtash
Fri 7th Davy McKay (MM)

Dechomet

Sun 26th Daniel, Mary Rose and Martin Matheson
Jack Murphy

Gargory

Sun 2nd Archdeacon Liam Boyle
Francis Cunningham
Peter and Una Gribben

Dear Parishioners

When I think over 2021, it is not one of happy memories or freedom. The previous year was a shock to the system, this year sadly repeated some of the experiences and we knew what would happen, or what could happen. Once more there is worry and concern, there is an uncertainty about the impact of this disease and how we will live our lives in care and protection of one another.

The closure of churches for public worship was one major influence on the life of the parish, the restrictive numbers allowed to attend a funeral – these are not experiences that are forgotten.

The reality is many people did have financial challenges, working or studying from home with poor internet services was very difficult. The balance of caring for children, helping them to learn at home, and hold down work responsibilities was difficult for many people. The personal cost will vary from person to person, grief is not restricted to death, we need to grieve for the other losses in our lives, but it is not easy to do so.

I am aware that at times the way I handled things or words I spoke will have hurt people, disappointed people, I do apologise. It has been a year when I have felt your care and support, and I do thank you.

This year there were 51 baptisms, 8 marriages and 28 deaths in the two parishes. There were many acts of kindness from person to person, whilst they are not recorded in books, they were often life supporting.

Fr Peter

Collections 19th Dec Parish

Dromara	£243
Drumgooland	£938

We welcome into Drumgooland Parish Odhran Cunningham and John Joe McEvoy

Congratulations to Stephen Brown and Joanne Murnaghan who were married recently.

Sick and housebound

I was due to bring Holy Communion on 3rd, 4th & 5th January, in the circumstances I will postpone these visits until February.