

Sunday Message

31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 30 October 2022 • Season Colour: Green • Psalter Week 3

CALLED TO BE SAINTS

LUKE 19:1-10

Today's Gospel is a beautiful story about conversion and how it can happen even to the most unlikely people.

Zacchaeus is one of the chief tax collectors in Jericho for the hated Roman occupiers. His occupation has made him rich, but it has also made him an outcast. To his people, he is a traitor and public sinner.

Zacchaeus hears that Jesus is coming to town and is anxious to see him. He climbs a sycamore tree to get a better view.

As he sits there watching, he nearly dies of shock when Jesus stops right under his tree and asks to spend the night in his house. The crowd is shocked, too – and outraged. "He's gone to a sinner's house as a guest," they murmur.

But Jesus ignores them. He looks Zacchaeus in the eye, sees the good that's in him, and invites him to change. And Zacchaeus changes. Feeling loved and accepted by a fellow Jew for the first time in years makes him a new person. He joyfully receives Jesus and opens his house, heart, and coffers. He will not cheat anybody anymore; instead, he will pay back those he has cheated four times the amount. And he will give half his possessions to the poor.

Now that he is a follower of Jesus, Zacchaeus becomes a new person. He is aware that he has ripped off people in the past and that such behaviour does not correspond with Jesus' way. Because Jesus looked on him with love, Zacchaeus can now look on others and himself with love. His life and manner of living are transformed. ■

SAY

Lord, help me to be more holy day by day. Help me to draw ever closer to you.

LEARN

We are all called to be saints.

The Christian is called to constant conversion.

PRAY

Remember your deceased loved ones on Wednesday, All Souls' Day. Pray that they may be counted among the communion of saints.

DO

Visit the grave(s) of your beloved dead this week. Ask the Lord to take them to himself.



REFLECT

Have you ever been called a saint? Do you describe your fellow parishioners as saints? Probably not. That type of talk makes us feel embarrassed and uncomfortable.

But calling other Christians saints was a common practice in the early church. The Acts of the Apostles describes Saul's persecution of the "saints in Jerusalem" (Acts 9:13). Later in Acts, Paul admits that "I put many of the saints in prison" (Acts 26:10). Paul ends his letter to the Philippians with the words, "All the saints send you greetings" (Phil 4:22).

Members of the early church referred to each other as saints. Saints were to be found among the spiritually weak and the spiritually strong, the educated and the uneducated, the poor and the well-off. Anyone baptised in the name of Jesus was among the saints.

Over the centuries, the understanding of sainthood narrowed, and it began to be applied only to exceptionally holy people. Church authorities took over the saint-making process. Candidates had to meet

specific criteria before being formally declared a saint. Sometimes the process is swift. Think of St Teresa of Calcutta or Pope John Paul II. More often, it takes decades or even centuries.

Even though the feast of All Saints honours the multitude of ordinary saints who will never be canonised, we tend to think of sainthood as applying only to a select few. For most of us, being canonised seems out of reach.

Pope Francis wants to change this way of thinking. In 2018, he published an apostolic letter, entitled *Gaudete et Exsultate* (Rejoice and Be Glad), on our call to be saints. In it, he reminds us of the Second Vatican Council's teaching that "all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord – each in his or her own way – to that perfect holiness by which the Father himself is perfect."

Pope Francis is well aware that being holy is not easy, and he suggests practical steps we can take to become saints. The key, he writes, is the beatitudes, which are the Christian's identity card. He offers a

practical example to show that everyday sanctity is possible.

"This holiness to which the Lord calls you," he writes, "will grow through small gestures. Here is an example: a woman goes shopping, she meets a neighbour and they begin to speak, and the gossip starts. But she says in her heart: 'No, I will not speak badly of anyone.' This is a step forward in holiness. Later, at home, one of her children wants to talk to her about his hopes and dreams, and even though she is tired, she sits down and listens with patience and love. That is another sacrifice that brings holiness. Later she experiences some anxiety, but recalling the love of the Virgin Mary, she takes her rosary and prays with faith. Yet another path of holiness. Later still, she goes out onto the street, encounters a poor person and stops to say a kind word to him. One more step." Each of these gestures is an example of holiness any of us can make any day.

We are not asked to go around calling each other saints. But we are called to be saints. Living according to the beatitudes is how we do it. ■

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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30th October 2022

31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Weekend masses

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

Feast of All Saints 1st Nov

Mon 31st 9:00am Leitrim 7:30pm Dechomet
Tues 1st 9:00am Dromara 7:30pm Gargory

Feast of All Souls 2nd Nov

Wed 2nd 9:00am Dromara 7:30pm Leitrim
Fri 7:30pm Dromara

Anniversaries (2023 Anniversary Book now available)

Leitrim

Sat 29th Nicky and Anne Duggan and Deceased Family Members
Rose McAleenan; John and Bridget O'Hare and Deceased Family Members
Annie B Morgan and Deceased Family Members
John McLoughlin
Sat 5th Pauline Kelly
John and Bel Malone
Alice McAnulty

Dromara

Sun 30th Michael Rice
Bridget, Peter and Frank McEvoy
Sun 6th Sarah Hughes (Finnis)

November Dead Lists are available at the back of the churches. If people wish to leave a memory card or photo of a deceased relative before the altar, they are welcome to do so.

Masses for the recently deceased in our parishes will be celebrated on Mon 7th Nov Dechomet, Wed 9th Nov Leitrim, Fri 11th Nov Finnis, all at 7:30pm. The names of those who have died in our parishes, or were buried in our parishes, will be called out, and a family member will carry up a candle in their memory. There will be candles available for those who wish to remember other loved ones who have died.

SVP Helplines

Drumgooland 078 2541 9067
Dromara 077 3883 8191

Safeguarding P Carville 077 8991 7741

Collections Parish	Dromara	Drumgooland
	£275	£660

We welcome into Dromara Parish Eireann Kennedy

Helping the Christians in the Holy Land

The Holy Cross Missionary Group from Bethlehem, will be visiting the parishes on 12th and 13th Nov, to sell religious articles (crucifixes; rosary beads, nativity cribs and plaques, made from olive wood in Bethlehem), to help and support poor Christian families, any help you could give them will be highly appreciated.

Lourdes 59 Club winners

6th Aug No. 20 S & M McEvoy
13th Aug No. 59 No winner
20th Aug No. 38 Ann Kelly
27th Aug No. 19 Jos. Doyle
3rd Sept No. 6 No winner
10th Sept No. 9 Louise Mackin
17th Sept No. 15 Patsy Ward
24th Sept No. 51 No winner
1st Oct No. 21 Kieran McEvoy
8th Oct No. 51 No winner
15th Oct No. 39 F & T McEvoy

Pledge for November

Many people offer spiritual support to a relation who is struggling because of alcohol or an addiction problem. Parishioners who wish to take a short-term Pioneer Pledge during the month of the Holy Souls are invited to visit: www.pioneers.ie/pray.

Gargory Altar Rota - November Ann Marie

Dromore Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage 2023

5-day pilgrimage to Lourdes in May 2023. If you are interested in travelling to Lourdes as a pilgrim in May 2023, please contact Dromara and Drumgooland Lourdes Committee: Ann Kelly (Secretary) 077 8819 5938; Kieran McEvoy (Chairperson) 079 8636 6162, or speak to any Committee Member no later than 25th Nov, to declare your interest. Further details will be available later.