

WALKING INTO THE WIND

When walking into the wind, the only thing that kept me going was resolve. It would have been tempting to stop walking altogether. I kept a focus on my journey and, in particular, on my destination. Most of the time, I couldn't see my destination. What I could see, however, was the scenery on the way, the beauty of the world around me. This helped strengthen my resolve to reach my destination.

It would have been tempting for me to want the wind to 'go away.' But walking into the wind takes more effort, burns more calories, and builds more muscle. Good can come of walking into the wind.

Of course, the wind that I experienced as blowing into my face and pushing me back was the same wind that was at another's back helping them along. The wind isn't mine to control.

WITH THE WIND AT MY BACK

On the climb to the summit, there is a path made of rocks. That day it was icy in places and water-filled in others. The rocks were treacherous. However, by now the wind was at my back. It literally pushed me up the path. I still had to do the climbing, but with the wind behind me, the climb seemed more doable; less a chore, more of an opportunity to go still higher. As I climbed, I reflected on what keeps the wind at my back in life.

I realised that acknowledging my need of God, and God's presence in my life, is one such thing. It allows me to accept that life isn't all about me. It allows me to accept that I am not, and need not, be in control. God is. Prayer, scripture and the Mass help keep me going, they keep the wind at my back, if you will. Being in touch with other people and having hobbies and interests also keep the wind at my back. My task is to find and maintain these things.

WHEN THE WIND DIED DOWN

At the mountain summit, the wind was at its strongest. There were times it nearly blew me off my feet. And yet, when I descended only a few feet from the summit, the wind died down completely. It wasn't that there was no wind anywhere. It was only that I had come to a spot on my journey where there was shelter from the wind. I felt a sense of calm envelop me. My body, which had felt so cold, began to heat up. I could take a moment to look around and give thanks for the journey I was on.

I reflected that there were many times I had walked on this mountain when there was no wind blowing, but I didn't have the same sense of thankfulness that I experienced that day in that spot. Other times I took the moments of calm for granted – not even seeing them as such. It took the strong wind to help me appreciate the calm times.

My journey ended safely, and I came back down the mountain, albeit with the feeling of the wind in my bones. I felt the energy I had expended in the muscles in my legs and back. Settling down with a cup of coffee, I allowed my mind to replay the teaching that came as I walked. I prayed:

Lord God, creator of mountains and valleys, maker of forests and oceans, architect of life itself, I give thanks for my walk today.

There will be times on life's journey when I feel like I am walking into the wind. Be with me, strengthening me along the way.

There will be times when I have the wind at my back. Help me to be grateful for these times and to know there are others who are struggling even as I feel that I am coasting. May I be a sign of your presence for them.

There will be times when I feel the absence of life's wind – the absence of struggle and worry. Help me to rest well when that happens, ever grateful and ready for the next leg of my journey. Amen. ■

Stu()space

12 September 2021 – 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

Psalter Week 4

SERIES: GOD IN THE EVERYDAY

Season colour: GREEN

In this series, **Jim Deeds** finds evidence of the divine in the ordinary and extraordinary events of every day.

WISDOM IN THE WIND



A walk to the summit of Divis Mountain reminded me of God's constant presence, whether the wind is at my back or in my face.

In a year of lockdown restrictions, I have come to appreciate one activity more than ever before – walking. I spent some hours recently walking to the summit of Divis Mountain and was taught some lessons as I went. It was the windiest day I've walked in for a long time. Depending on what direction I was going, the wind was at my back or in my face. The presence or absence of this powerful wind became the dominant feature of my walk. As happens frequently when walking alone, my thoughts turned to God and the nature of life's journey.



Today's readings

Is 50:5-9
Jm 2:14-18
Mk 8:27-35

GOD'S WORD TODAY

Jesus puts a key question to his disciples: "Who do people say that I am?" After they list what people are saying about him, Jesus begins to talk about what lies ahead of him in Jerusalem. He is trying to get the disciples to see that he is not a powerful and glorious Messiah, but one who will suffer and die for the salvation of the world.



Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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24th Sunday in Ordinary Time – 12th September 2021

God's Word this month (taken from Reality magazine)

The crucial question

Today, Mark's Gospel moves from the section dealing with Jesus' ministry in Galilee to that dealing with his journey to Jerusalem. But before he heads south to Jerusalem, Jesus travels north to the villages surrounding Caesarea Philippi.

On the way, he puts a key question to his disciples: "Who do people say that I am?" From the very beginning of his Gospel, Mark has identified Jesus as Messiah and Son of God. The disciples have struggled to recognise Jesus' true identity, as have the people of Galilee. Now, before the journey to Jerusalem and the fate that awaits him there, Jesus attempts to get the disciples to acknowledge who he really is.

In response, they list what people are saying about him. He is John the Baptist returned from the dead. He is Elijah returned from heaven. He is a prophet. Now he asks them directly: "Who do you say that I am?" Peter seems to give the correct answer: "You are the Christ (or Messiah)." It sounds right. The only problem is that Peter is identifying Jesus with the royal, conventional and powerful Messiah of Jewish expectation. Peter still cannot recognise Jesus as the Suffering Messiah.

Now Jesus begins to talk about what lies ahead of him in Jerusalem. He is trying to get the disciples to see that he is not a powerful and glorious Messiah, but one who will suffer and die. In response, Peter "remonstrates" with Jesus. The Greek text reads that Peter "took hold" of Jesus. This earns him the sharpest rebuke ever given by Jesus to anyone. Jesus calls Peter "Satan." There may well be a play on the Hebrew word *sātān*, which means a "stumbling block." If Peter causes Jesus to stumble in fulfilling God's plan, then he will play into the hands of Satan. What Jesus wants is that Peter and the other disciples "get behind" him to support and follow him - not get in his way. *Contd. over*

Collections

Dromara
Drumgooland

Parish

£376
£1146

Priest

£851
£1929

We welcome into Drumgooland Parish
Alara Rose O'Higgins

Congratulations to Kieran Doyle and Paula Morgan who were married recently

Anniversary Masses

Leitrim

Sat 11th Eddie McAleenan
Patsy Malone
Sat 18th John and Kathleen McMullan and
Deceased Family Members
(Clonvaraghan)
Owen Kelly and Deceased Family
Members (Backaderry)
Mary Catherine and Seamus Doyle

Dromara

Sun 12th Susan Darby, Joe McCann and
Deceased Family Members
Fri 17th Peter Greenan (Castlewellan) and
Deceased Family Members
Sun 19th Pat and John Gordon

Contd.

A terrible fate awaits Jesus. Similarly, a difficult future lies in store for those who follow him as disciples. Jesus sets out the conditions for being a disciple. It involves "denying oneself" and "taking up the cross" and following Jesus. Denial of self doesn't mean small, simple Lenten penances. It means putting discipleship above everything else in one's life. "Taking up the cross" means a willingness to follow Jesus in the midst of suffering and even to the point of death.

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

Trócaire

The Lenten Campaign raised £2,861,548 in Northern Ireland and due to UK matched funding they received £2,000,000 from the UK government. Thank you to all who contributed to that appeal, especially at such a challenging time for people.

The funding will be used in South Sudan to supply food and water, empower women, facilitate access to cultivated land, provide suitable crops and training on sustainable farming practices. This is to help families to become self-sufficient without relying on aid.

John Paul II Awards

There will be mass in St Michael's Church, Finnis on Sat 18th Sept at 11am to present this year's awards to parishioners of Dromara and Drumgooland

Drumgooland St Vincent de Paul

Contact us in confidence on 075 8644 7427