

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.

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE



Christians are people of the Word. As St Paul reminds us, we must use the gift of language in such a way that it lifts people up rather than knocks people down.

In today's second reading, St Paul offers clear instructions for how the followers of Jesus should live. Some divisions or tensions must have been surfacing among the members of the church in Ephesus, and Paul is anxious to address them. So he warns them to never hold grudges against others, or lose their temper, or raise their voice to anybody, or call each other names, or allow any sort of spitefulness. Be friends with each other and kind, he tells them, forgiving each other as readily as God has forgiven them. They must follow Christ by loving each other as Christ has loved them.

Paul's message to the Christian community is about respect, tolerance, gentleness, love, words as relevant for us today as when he put ink to paper almost 2,000 years ago.

THREE LITTLE RULES

We are all familiar with the old expression: "Sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me." But we know that it is simply not true. Words have extraordinary power and can do enormous damage. They can scar for life; they can destroy. And the world wide web and modern means of communication mean that words have a greater capacity to hurt than ever before. Think of the victims of internet bullies, who, often under the cloak of anonymity, use Facebook or Twitter or online forums to abuse and smear and ridicule those they don't like or with whom they disagree.

Words have enormous power and can inflict enormous harm. As people of the Word, Christians need to be conscious of the words we use, and ensure that what we say and how we say it always gives glory to God. One way to try to do just that is by living according to what I like to call the 3 c's:

The first c: be clean. The words I use should be

wholesome and pure, never coarse or crude. We tend to use bad language for emphasis, for effect, but bad language is so commonplace today that we can become immune to it. We may not even be aware of the extent to which we use it casually ourselves. The English language contains more than one million words; there are plenty of ways we can express ourselves colourfully and with emphasis without the need for vulgar talk.

The second c: be courteous. Our aim should be to talk to and about others the way we would like them to talk to and about us. Whether it's on social media or on the road or street or the sports field, we know that common courtesy is becoming less common, that we are becoming more rude and less civil. Think of the amount of online trolling that is taking place and how road rage incidents are growing in frequency. Whenever or wherever we encounter people, no matter how trying or testing the situation, no matter how angry we may become, we are called to be courteous and considerate in how we communicate with them.

The third c: be constructive. We should always use words that build up not knock down, that encourage not destroy. Sometimes it's necessary to challenge or criticise another but we should do it in a way that is positive and gentle and that honours the other by treating her with respect. We should never use words to humiliate or diminish another human being. Pope Francis speaks frequently about the harmful nature of gossip, which he has described as a plague worse than Covid 19. We know what it's like to be gossiped about; we also know how easy it is to indulge in gossip. We should always talk to or about others in a helpful, generous manner.

Christians are people of the Word. As St Paul reminds us, we must use the gift of language in such a way that it lifts people up rather than knocks people down. To be clean, courteous, and constructive is to build God's kingdom and give God glory. ■



Today's readings

Kng 19:4-8
Eph 4:30-5:2
Jn 6: 41-51

GOD'S WORD TODAY

The Gospel readings on these Sundays are from Chapter 6 of John's Gospel. The text is a rich tapestry of highly complex theological concepts and biblical allusions.

Yet when we get past the conceptual complexity and the wealth of biblical allusion, the text says something that is both simple and profound. God loves us. The consequence of the Father's love is his desire that we live forever in his presence. It was out of this amazing love for us that God sent Jesus into the

world. All we have to do is come to Jesus in faith and receive what he offers with trust, and that which God desires for us will happen.

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time – 8th August 2021

The Prophets

Habakuk

He appeals to God - "how long shall I cry for help and you do not listen?"

In the midst of war, the sense that the people are defenseless, that they have nothing left. Yet an awareness that the righteous live by faith, they are loyal and enduring, it is the arrogant who will lose their ill-gotten gains.

The prophet does trust that no matter what does happen, he will trust in the Lord.

Jeremiah

One of the major prophets, a reference to the number of chapters. He speaks in the final days of the Southern Kingdom. Jerusalem falls twice to the Babylonians and then the Exile begins. There is a period of time when the king and the people rediscover the Book of the Law and return to following God, but they slip back into their ways. They take God for granted, the presence of the Temple and the promise that God would be with David's successors will not save them if they are not faithful to God.

Jeremiah does not choose to be a prophet, he was called by God - "before I was born, He called me" God loves his people, an echo of Hosea, and when his people are hurt, God is hurt. Yet the unfaithfulness of the people, especially the rulers, is constant. They make deals with other nations rather than trust in him.

Jeremiah is not a welcome prophet, he fears for his life but he must pass on God's word. In the end he goes into exile with the people after the city falls and the Temple is looted and the majority of the people must walk to Babylon as captives.

Weekend masses

Sat 7th 11:00am & 12noon Leitrim
6:00pm Dechomet
7:30pm Leitrim
Sun 8th 9:00am Gargory
11:00am Dromara

Weekday masses

Mon 9th 9:00am Leitrim
7:30pm Dechomet
Tues 10th 9:00am Dromara
Wed 11th 6:30pm & 7:30pm Leitrim
Fri 13th 7:30pm Dromara

Anniversary Masses

Leitrim

Sat 7th 11am Tony Clarke (MM)
12noon Sarah Lennon (MM)
7.30pm Paddy O'Hare; Hugh Morgan
Bernard and Ellen Cunningham

Mon 9th 9:00am Kevin Mooney

Wed 11th 6:30pm Charlie Keown (MM)

Sat 14th Christopher Rice
Michael Bannon

Dromara

Sun 8th Sean McKay
Mary E McKay (Dree)

Fri 13th Kathleen, Barney, Gerard and Pat
McNeill and Deceased Family Members
Pat and Annie Branniff

Sun 15th Deceased Members of the McKinney
Family (Artana)

Changes to guidance about church attendance

On Mon 26th Jul, the NI Executive decided to remove the **legal** requirement to wear a face covering within a place of worship.

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 2m social distance will be reduced to 1m in a church setting. The change in social distance space will not be introduced into the parishes until the weekend I return, 7th/8th Aug.

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.