

Stu()space

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.



VALUED FOR WHO WE ARE

A battered coin reminded me that our worth is not dictated by our experiences or the judgements of others, but by the love of the one who created us.

Some time ago, I found myself travelling from Belfast to Dublin. Along the way, there are three toll booths, so I threw some coins on the passenger seat before I set off to prepare for this familiar process. At the first two tolls, I reached into the pile of coins and handed the one euro and two 20 cent coins to a smiling attendant. But, as I came to the third booth, something happened that stopped me in my tracks. I reached into my pile of coins and was about to hand them over when I noticed one in particular. One of the 20 cent coins.

This coin was different from the others. When I lifted it, I noticed it was dirty and jaded looking. It had been knocked about and battered, and was no longer smooth and circular. It had dents and edges that weren't there when it was new. Something about it resonated within me. I got a feeling that I didn't want to part with it, so I swapped it for another coin.

What, I wondered, was it about the coin that struck me as being noteworthy? As I drove on through Dublin's south side, with its wonderful architecture and expensive houses and apartments, the answer came to me: even though this coin was old and battered (and not at all as shiny and clean as the houses I was driving by), it held the same worth as any other coin of its denomination. Despite its bruised and battered exterior, it was just as valuable as any other 20 cent coin. In fact, to me, it was a little bit more valuable because I couldn't part with it at the toll booth.

Here in the midst of this affluent area, what we in Belfast call 'real money,' I had a wakeup call about what value really is. The coin wasn't valuable because of how it looked. It was inherently worthy because of what it was. Its value was not dictated by its experiences since being created. Its value was guaranteed by the one who created it.

It was then I realised that I knew this coin. I think that's why I couldn't part with it. I'd met the coin before.

I'd sat and held the coin, both of us crying as he or she told me of their pain and how they've been bruised and battered.

I'd heard the coin on TV and radio calling for changes in the church to ensure that no one is hurt again and that those who facilitated the hurt are held to account.

I'd seen the coin sitting in doorways, wrapped only in an old sleeping bag, heated only by a half-lit cigarette, as the rain pelted down and there was no bed or home to go to. I'd heard the coin put themselves down for not being 'good enough' in a world that values material gain as the biggest and best we should aspire to. I'd seen the coin carry a look of worry and despair as life threw turmoil and trouble its way.

Not only did I realise that I knew the coin, I knew I had been the coin more than a few times, too. This coin, on the passenger seat of my car, was every one of us who has lived and who carry the marks to prove it.

SAY A LITTLE PRAYER

As I journeyed onwards that day, a prayer formed in my heart, which I wrote down afterwards.

"For those who have been abused and carry the marks on the outside and/or deeper marks inside – may they know love, consolation and justice. For anyone who has lost the sense of their own worth – may they know that they are inherently valuable, dignified and loved. For an end to poverty – may we work for a world that shares its resources so that no one lives a life of hunger, homelessness or lack of opportunity. For all who need a boost of love, confidence and friendship – may we know that God loves us, especially when we experience the bruising and battering that life can throw at us."

Perhaps you would like to say this prayer this week. You could even put a battered little coin in a sacred place in your home to remind you that your worth – and the worth of all people – is not dictated by our experiences or the judgements of others, but by the love of the one who created us. ■



Today's readings

Wis 2:12.17-20

Jm 3:16–4:3

Mk 9:30-37

GOD'S WORD TODAY

The disciples were arguing as to who would have status and power in the new messianic kingdom. Their mentality is completely at odds with what Jesus was trying to teach them on the road. But Jesus sets out his understanding of the leadership that is to be exercised in his kingdom. The person who desires to be first must be last of all and servant of the others.

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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25th Sunday in Ordinary Time – 19th September 2021

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

Jesus and his disciples are journeying through Galilee towards Jerusalem. This is a journey on which Jesus will try to get them to understand what true discipleship means. Jesus is clear about his fate. He will be handed over to others who will kill him and three days later he will rise again.

They arrive at Capernaum and enter a house. When Jesus asks what they were arguing about, he is met with sullen silence. They had been discussing who among them was the greatest. Still thinking in terms of the conventional Jewish Messiah, they were arguing as to who would have status and power in the new messianic kingdom.

Jesus now sits down. He calls the Twelve to him and offers an instruction in two parts. The first part sets out Jesus' understanding of the leadership that is to be exercised in his kingdom. The person who desires to be first must be last and servant of the others. The Twelve think Jesus will be a glorious Messiah. He tells them he will be a Suffering Messiah. The Twelve think in terms of powerful and prestigious positions in the messianic kingdom. He tells them that being last and servant of all is what counts. The cross that awaits them in Jerusalem reverses all human measurements of success and reveals the true values of Jesus' kingdom. Jesus then offers the second part of his instruction in a dramatic fashion. He sets a child in front of them. He wraps his arms around the child and identifies the child with himself. The one that welcomes the child welcomes Jesus and the one that welcomes Jesus welcomes the Father. Children at that time had no status, power or value. If an adult were to "welcome" a child (as an equal) it would mean turning social and cultural values upside down. It would mean putting aside any ideas of self-importance or adult status.

Collections

Parish	
Dromara	£160
Drumgooland	£805

Recently deceased Fr Tom McAteer, Barnmeen

Anniversary Masses

Leitrim

Sat 18 th	John and Kathleen McMullan and Deceased Family Members (Clonvaraghan) Owen Kelly and Deceased Family Members (Backaderry) Mary Catherine and Seamus Doyle
Mon 20 th	Pat McClean Bilbo Middleton
Sat 25 th	Teresa Wright Patsy Malone Mary and James Malone John and Belle Malone

Dromara

Sun 19 th	Pat and John Gordon
Fri 24 th	Jim Campbell
Sun 26 th	Wesley Hunter

New Rotas for those who open and close Leitrim Chapel are available in the sacristy. Thank you for this valuable work.

Drumgooland St Vincent de Paul

Contact us in confidence on 075 8644 7427

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

John Paul II Awards

Congratulations to Anne-Marie Fegan, Michael McKey, Aoife McCrickard and Aimee McKay who received their awards recently.

Registration for the Award begins in year 12, if anyone wants more information please contact: youthdirector@dromorediocese.org

QUB Catholic Chaplaincy

The Catholic Chaplaincy at Queen's University has reopened for the new academic year. We are a vibrant community of faith and friendship at the heart of campus where students feel welcome, listened-to, valued and supported. For more on our liturgy schedule, events, facilities and amazing Café, visit qubcatholic.org We can't wait to welcome you! Facebook page: https://fb.watch/7_WiupRkxY/