

# Sunday Message

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WORD

Year A • 26 February 2023 • Colour: Violet • Psalter Week 1



## STOPPAGE TIME

(MT 4:1-11)

Part of growing to maturity is figuring out who we are and what we want out of life. We seek meaning and happiness. We want to find ourselves. Some people achieve this while going through school and college. For others, it takes longer. A few even step away from their job or regular routine to go on a journey of discovery. They take time out to look at themselves and what they're about.

This is what Jesus does in today's Gospel. He has spent three decades living at home as a regular member of the community, probably engaged in the family carpentry business. But after being baptised in the Jordan, he feels the need to take a deeper look at himself. He steps away from what he has been doing to think and pray. He wants to get a sense of God's plan for him. So he goes out into the wilderness on a journey of discovery.

While there, he is tempted to seek wealth, glory, power. Satan is luring him in a particular direction, trying to get him to give into some of the strongest human temptations, but Jesus will not follow. He knows this is the wrong way to go.

At the end of the 40 days, he is sure of what God wants of him. He knows the direction his life must take. You could say he has found himself and his mission.

That is what the season of Lent is about. It invites us to go on a journey of discovery, to take time to look at the shape our life is in and see what needs changing in order to be our best selves. ■

### PRAY

Pray that this season will be a time of renewal for the entire Church. Pray, too, for catechumens who are preparing for baptism at Easter.

### DO

Lent is not so much about giving up as about discovery. Take time to look at your life. What do you need to discover or rediscover this Lent?

### REFLECT

In his book *Let us dream*, published last year, Pope Francis uses the word 'stoppage' to describe the Covid-19 lockdown. He uses it to describe how so much of life as we knew it ground to a standstill, a complete halt. It was a traumatic experience for everyone, but Pope Francis says stoppage can also be good. It gives us time to think, reflect, assess our priorities, consider what is important and what is not.

Stoppage, Pope Francis says, offers a place of refuge against the tyranny of the urgent. We know what he means. Life can be so busy; everything can appear so urgent that we don't have the time or opportunity to step back a bit. The lockdown forced us to step back, to take a breather from the tyranny of the urgent. Lent is our annual opportunity to do the same. It's our stoppage time, our chance to step away from the demands of the urgent, to stop and think and pray and evaluate.

Look at your life. How good a Christian are you? Is there anything you need to change in order to draw closer to Jesus? ■

### LEARN

Lent coincides with spring. It reminds us how deeply the rhythms of life and death are embedded in our world. New life can only come into being because the old life has passed away. One of the great messages of Lent is that we can only find new life when we let go of the dead parts of ourselves that hold us back from growing. Just as a rose bush needs pruning to produce well-shaped roses, we need to allow ourselves to be pruned to become the kind of people God wants us to be.



### SAY

Lord, during this Lenten season help me to turn towards you every day so that I may find new life in you.

# Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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## 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent

### 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

**Dromara Choir** Practice Monday evening at 6:50pm.  
New and previous members very welcome

The **Rosary** will be prayed for peace after each weekday mass in Dromara during Lent, in the seats nearest Our Lady's altar. Everyone, including children, most welcome to join in.

### Anniversaries

#### Leitrim

Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Patrick Malone  
Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Francis & Margaret Smith  
Patrick McCartan

#### Gargory

Sun 26<sup>th</sup> Phyllis McAleenan

#### Dromara

Sun 26<sup>th</sup> Dan & Mae Flynn

### SMA Dromantine, Newry

**-Lenten Reflection Day** Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Mar 9:30am-5pm  
Kindfulness... a gifted way of living my life. An opportunity for time aside to reflect on the Season of Lent and to open our minds and hearts afresh to celebrate Holy Week and Easter. Led by Fr Damian Bresnahan SMA. £35 (includes lunch)

**- Dance of Life Retreat** Fri 17<sup>th</sup> (5pm)-Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Mar (2pm)

In this retreat, the opportunity to dance may bring a renewed awareness in your sense of self, connection with others, and connection with God. Led by Sr Mary Taylor OLA & Fr Damian Bresnahan SMA. £220  
Contact: [admin@dromantineconference.com](mailto:admin@dromantineconference.com) /30821964

**Caring for Carers - are you a Carer?** Please come along to an all age-event for both carers and the cared-for, to relax & unwind with tea, coffee & a chat, free lunch. Featuring: 'Remember When' reminiscing; Jumping Clay workshop; therapy pony; advice available from counsellor/benefits advisor; farm-family health checks & local carers support group. Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar-20<sup>th</sup> Apr, Connect Hall, Rathfriland Rd, Dromara

**SVDP:** Drom 07738838191/Drumg 07825419067

**Safeguarding Contact:** P Carville 07789917741

Collections	Dromara	Drumgooland
Parish	£255	£895

**Financial support** Thank you to all who give so generously to the parish collections. The new envelope boxes will go out in April. If anyone wishes to have a box or wishes to set up a standing order, please let us know by email, or by speaking to Fr Peter.

**Earthquake response** Anyone who wishes to support the people in crisis due to the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria can make a donation to Trócaire, which will be passed onto Caritas Internationalis Network, who are working there. Please put your donation in an envelope marked 'Earthquake'. This will be passed on as soon as possible.

**Accord** is currently recruiting volunteers to train as marriage preparation facilitators. Marriage facilitators are part of a team that prepare couples for the sacrament of marriage. If you are interested, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact [marriagepreparation@accord.ie](mailto:marriagepreparation@accord.ie)

**Lourdes Diocesan Pilgrimage** spaces left, if interested please contact: Ann 077 8819 5938,

**We welcome** into Drumgooland Parish Theodore Patrick O'Higgins

**Upcoming Spring Events at Peter Morgan's Cottage**  
Tues 7<sup>th</sup> Mar at 11:15am Pottery Painting (by Colours, Ballynahinch). £12 (includes lunch)  
Booking essential: 07989688939

### Also in March (details to follow):

- Local History Talk with Trevor Martin
- Traditional Music & Social Evenings
- Easter Flower Arranging Wed 29<sup>th</sup>

**World Day of Prayer - Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> Mar**, St John's Parish Church, Dromara 8pm, all welcome.

**Dromara Community Group 'Soup Lunch Mondays'** for people feeling isolated & would like to get out and meet people for a chat, tea and coffee available. Lagan Park Centre, 28a Hillsborough Rd, Dromara at 1pm. We would love to see you there! Joan Browne 07803117641

**Gargory Altar Society** Mar - Fiona

**Leitrim Cleaners** Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> Mar - Bridie's Team