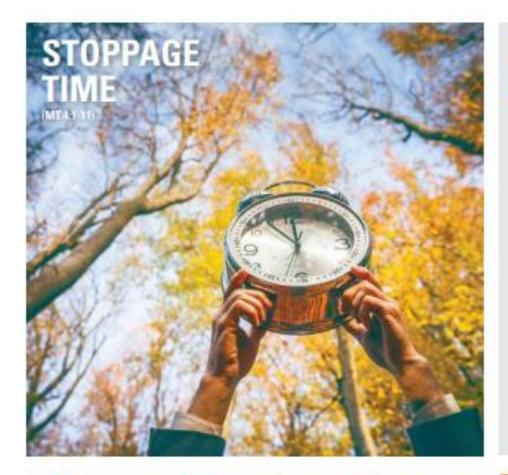
Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year A + 26 February 2023 - Colour: Violet + Peulter Week 1



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 wildemess 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

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

26th February 2023 1st Sunday of Lent

Weekend massesCollectionsDromaraDromaraSun9:00am Gargory11:00am DromaraParish£235£895Weekday massesMon9:00am Leitrin7:30pm DechometFinancial support Thank you to all who give so generously to the parish collections.Tues9:00am DromaraThe new envelope boxes will go out in April.Weekday massesMon9:00am DromaraThe new envelope boxes will go out in April.Tues9:00am DromaraThe new envelope boxes will go out in April.Tues9:00am Dromaraby email, or by speaking to F Peter.DromaraChoir Practice Monday evening at 6:50pm.Earthquake response Anyone who wishes to support the people in crisis due to the earthquake rationalis Network, who are working there. Please put your donation in an envelope marked "Earthquake". Thatki will be passed on as soon as possible.LeitrinSat 25%Patrick Malone Sat 25%Sat 25%Phyllis McAleenan DromaraAccord is currently recruiting volunteers to train as soon as possible.Sun 26 th Dan & Mae FlynnSun 26 th Dan & Mae FlynnSMA Dromantine, Newry - Lenten Reflection Day Sat 4 th Mar 9:30am-5pm Kindfulnes a gifted way of living my life. An opportunity for time aside to reflect on the Season of cent and to open our minks and hearts afresh to celebrate Holy Week and Easter. Led by Fr Damian Bresnahan SMA. £35 (includes lunch) Dongra's Cotage Tues? Fig ar Mar at 11:15am Pottery Painting (by Colours, Ballynahinch). £12 (includes lunch) Booking essential: Crisper Social Evening to an all agreevent for both carres and the cared/ro, telax & un							
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