

Sunday Message

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 18 September 2022 • Season Colour: Green • Psalter Week 1



THE QUALITY OF MERCY

LUKE 16:1-13

In today's Gospel, Jesus uses a parable about a steward's sharp practice to make a point about our relationship with God.

The steward has been accused of wasting his master's property. He knows he's about to lose his job and end up with nothing. Back in Jesus' time, losing one's job meant becoming destitute unless you had friends or family to help you out.

Realising he's not able for physical work and too proud to go begging, the steward does some quick thinking. He needs to act, and fast. So he hatches a plan that might provide him with some friends and security in the future.

He calls his master's debtors one by one and cancels or reduces the amount of money they owe his master. He calculates they will be grateful and look out for him when he is jobless. It is an unethical and desperate plan, but it works.

When the master discovers what the steward has done, he is impressed. He praises the steward for being clever enough to know what to do in this desperate situation.

In telling this parable, Jesus isn't condoning improper behaviour. Rather, he uses it to stress the importance of taking decisive action when decisive action is needed. The steward hadn't been doing his job properly and so faced the sack. But when his future security was on the line, he acted quickly. He didn't hesitate. He saw that he needed to act – and he did.

It must be the same with our spiritual life. Our relationship with God is paramount, but we can neglect it and drift along or get distracted by other things. If we neglect our relationship with God, we need to act as quickly and decisively as that astute steward.

We need to be as clever in safeguarding our spiritual future – and the salvation of our souls – as the smart people of this world are when their financial future is in peril. ■

PRAY

Pray that you will always live in such a way as to give glory to God. Pray that you will always seek to do the right thing.

LEARN

As Christians, we must never let the love of money or any other distraction draw us away from God.

Our relationship with God is of paramount significance in our life.

SAY

Lord, help me to put you first.
Never let me drift away from you. Amen.

DO

In these challenging economic times, we are all aware of the threat to our financial welfare. But what about the danger to our spiritual welfare? What action do you need to take to deepen your connection with God?



REFLECT

Some years ago in Thailand, a mobile phone ad was designed to touch people's heartstrings. The three-minute video begins with a small boy being chased out of a chemist's by the owner, who has caught him stealing. She forces him to return the stolen medicine and demands to know what he plans to do with it.

It was for his mum, he said.

At this point, a nearby café owner comes over and calms the situation by paying the chemist for the stolen items. He hands the boy the medicine and tells his daughter to get him some food, too. With medicine and food in hand, the boy runs off.

Now the film jumps forward 30 years, and the man is still working in his café with his daughter's help when, suddenly, he collapses. His daughter is distraught as he

lays unconscious in hospital and horrified when she's handed a medical bill for over 17,000 dollars. Numb with shock, she talks to the doctor who's attending to her father. Desperate, she puts her house up for sale to cover the cost.

The next scene shows her asleep with her head on her father's bed. Upon waking, she finds a new medical bill in an envelope next to her. The amount? Zero.

A note alongside it explains that "all expenses have been paid, with three packs of painkillers and a bag of veggie soup."

It turns out the doctor treating her dad is the same boy he helped all those years ago after he stole medicine from the chemist. The debt is cancelled, written off. "Giving is the best communication," states the ad at the end.

Unlike the steward in the Gospel story, who is motivated solely by self-

preservation, the café owner and doctor in the ad were motivated by mercy and compassion. The café owner intervened with the chemist to help the frightened little boy. Thirty years later, when he had the opportunity, the boy returned that mercy.

Mercy is an overriding theme of Pope Francis' ministry. It's an ingredient, he says, that is all too often missing from the church and our lives. In all our living and preaching, in everything we do, we must show mercy, he says. To not let rules and regulations get in the way of mercy; to not become so caught up in self-righteousness that we forget mercy.

If we seek to practise mercy at all times, we needn't worry about our spiritual future. We will have acted sensibly, prudently, lovingly, as Christians should. Like the steward in the Gospel, we will have acted wisely. ■

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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18th September 2022
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Receased deceased Desmond Loughran, Newry

Anniversary Masses

Leitrim

Sat 17th Mary Catherine and Seamus Doyle
John and Kathleen McMullan and
Deceased Family Members
(Clonvaraghan)
Owen Kelly and Deceased Family
Members (Backaderry)
Sarah Magennis (Legananny)
Mon 19th Bilbo Middleton
Pat McClean
Wed 21st Winnifred Savage
Sat 24th Patsy Madine
Mary and James Malone

Dromara

Sun 18th Francis McEvoy (Ardtanagh)
Pat and John Gordon
Sun 25th Wesley Hunter

Dromara GAC - Save The Date

Dromara GAC Gala Ball (Black Tie)
Sat 12th Nov, Millbrook Lodge Hotel, for 16 years
and over. Tickets £50.
Entertainment by *The Untouchables*.
More details to follow about ticket sales.

Collections	Dromara	Drumgooland
Parish	£232	£665

Congratulations to

Jennifer Savage and Declan Leonard,
and to Mark Cunningham and Alicia Rodgers,
who were married recently

Do This In Memory

The First Communion preparation programme will
begin on 8th/9th Oct. Please return the reply slips to
the school before the end of this month

Altar Servers

Completed application forms can be returned at
mass. If anyone wishes to serve and did not receive
a form, please ask for one at mass

Dromara New Cemetery

The parish has received permission to proceed
towards the tender process. Once the timescale is
agreed the application process will be published in
the bulletin

Fundraising Coffee Morning - Save The Date

Sun 25th Sept, 11:30am to 3:30pm, in Laitroim
Clubrooms, to raise funds and awareness for a
new charity, Pulmonary Fibrosis NI.
Everyone is welcome to drop in and stay as long
as you wish.

Dromore Diocesan Historical Society AGM

The Society will hold its Annual General Meeting
on Mon 26th Sept at 7:00pm in St Peter's Hall,
Lurgan, to which all members are invited.
After the formal business of Reports and Election of
Officers, there will be a talk at 7:30pm, by Jim
McCorry, entitled "*Catholicism, Nationalism, Lurgan
and the Great War*"
Jim was born and raised in Lurgan, his talk will be
of great interest to many local families.
Non-members are most welcome to the talk and will
be admitted after the AGM.