

# Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

Fr Peter McNeill Tel: 028 4065 0207 Emergency Tel: 07969 403762  
Email: [dromaradrumgooland@dromorediocese.org](mailto:dromaradrumgooland@dromorediocese.org) Web: [www.dromaradrumgooland.org](http://www.dromaradrumgooland.org)

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent**  
**15<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

## Weekend Masses

**Sat** 6:00pm Dechomet 7:30pm Leitrim  
**Sun** 9:00am Gargory 11:00am Dromara

## Weekday Masses

**Mon** 9am Leitrim



## St Patrick's Day masses

**Mon 16<sup>th</sup>** 7pm Dromara 8pm Leitrim  
**Tues 17<sup>th</sup>** 10am Gargory 7:30pm Dechomet  
**Wed** 7:30pm Leitrim  
**Fri** 7:30pm Dromara



*We pray for our recently deceased*  
*Gerry Trainor, Carnaloe Rd*

## ANNIVERSARIES

### Leitrim

**Sat 14<sup>th</sup>** Margaret McCrickard  
Anne Bannon  
Malachy Savage

**Mon 16<sup>th</sup> 9am** Susan & Patrick Rice

**Wed 18<sup>th</sup>** Anne McCabe  
Patsy McCabe

**Sat 21<sup>st</sup>** James Malone

### Gargory

**Sun 15<sup>th</sup>** Noleen Hardy

### Dromara

**Sun 15<sup>th</sup>** Mary Hughes (Derry)

**Sun 22<sup>nd</sup>** Pearl McEvoy

## SVDP contact numbers

Dromara 07738 838191  
Drumgooland 07825 419067

Live Streaming of Masses

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiTLQJ1tek5IHBTdkMR6ptw>

## Collections Dromara Drumgooland

Parish £ 335 £1,328

Thank you for your continued contributions  
St Michael's Hall - GAA £250 & Hire £50

New boxes of envelopes will be available  
for distribution next weekend

**Congratulations** to the children  
who celebrated their First Confession  
over the past three weeks

## NI Blood Transfusion Service

Blood donation session in  
1<sup>st</sup> Dromore Presbyterian Church  
**Mon 16<sup>th</sup> Mar 12:30pm to 7:30pm**

The link to book an appointment is:

<https://nibts.hscni.net/online-booking-for-blood-donation-appointments/>

## Cancer Research UK

**Dromara local committee**  
**Quiz, Fri 20<sup>th</sup> March 7:30pm**

King's Bar, Finnis  
Teams of six, max.

Entry fee £5 per person  
All support most welcome

## St Patrick's Dawn Prayer Gatherings

Christians from all denominations  
will gather at St Patrick's grave in  
Downpatrick at **5:45am 17<sup>th</sup> March**  
to pray The Our Father/Lord's Prayer,  
one hundred times for peace  
and unity in Christ.  
Everyone welcome.

*We welcome into Dromara Parish*  
*Codhran Rossa Kelly*

## Diocesan Director of Safeguarding

Stephen Sherry 07301 246329  
[safeguardingdirector@dromorediocese.org](mailto:safeguardingdirector@dromorediocese.org)

# Sunday Message

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (LAETARE)

THE WORD

Year A • 15 March 2026 • Colour: Rose or Violet • Psalter Week 4

## SEEING WITH GOD'S EYES

JOHN 9:1-41

Today's Gospel tells the wonderful story of a man born blind who becomes a powerful witness to Jesus.

The blind man trusts Jesus enough to allow him to put mud in his eyes; then he obeys Jesus' instructions to wash in the Pool of Siloam. And the man is cured – he is able to see. In the long conversations that follow, first with his neighbours and then with the Pharisees, the man born blind comes to see more and more clearly who Jesus is, and to lead others to faith. He moves from not knowing Jesus, to recognising him as a prophet, to seeing him as a man of God, then as the Son of Man, and finally to acknowledging him as Lord.

His Journey of faith goes from blindness of eyes and heart to being able to see not only with his eyes but also with his heart. ■

### PRAY

Pray especially for young people who lack self-esteem and find it hard to see their God-given beauty and potential.

### LEARN

The Christian is someone who leads others to Jesus

Jesus is the light of the world

We are called to see ourselves and others the way God sees us

### DO

Lent is a time when we are invited to become aware of our blind spots. Examine your life, your relationships, your values, your attitudes. Look for your blind spots. Ask the Lord to heal you, as he healed the man born blind.

### SAY

"Lord, I thank you for the gift of faith. Help me to see as you see. Amen."



### REFLECT

The first reading describes how David, a young shepherd boy, is anointed king of Israel. God instructs the prophet Samuel to visit the home of Jesse, for God has chosen a king from among his sons. Samuel was certain that Eliab, the first born, was the one God had selected. After all, traditionally the oldest is recognised as leader. Of all eight sons, David would have been considered the one least likely to be selected. He was the youngest, a boy of fresh complexion, the least experienced, but God instructs Samuel not to judge by appearances but as God does, by looking into the heart. Humans look at appearances but God looks beyond appearances, at what really counts.

We can only imagine how shocked Jesse and his family must have been at this extraordinary turn of events - that God had personally selected one of his own sons to be king of Israel and that the one selected was the last one they would have considered.

This story offers an invaluable lesson we should take to heart. We must not judge by appearances, but try to see ourselves and others with God's eyes, try to see the potential and the good in every person.

Life today, especially for younger people, is harder than when I was growing up in the 1970s. There was no Internet back then, no social media. We hadn't to worry about online bullying or how we looked on Instagram or TikTok. Young women weren't inundated daily with hundreds of images of stick-thin Barbie lookalikes, all conforming to unrealistic beauty standards today's girls are told they must aspire to. Andrew Tate wasn't around to preach his message of toxic masculinity, encouraging boys to treat girls as objects.

The pressure today to be successful, with a rewarding career and a big income and a perfect family and a nice house, is huge. Social media, with its obsession with looks

and money and celebrity, makes self-love even harder.

And this pressure costs. It damages self-esteem. We compare ourselves with others and think we don't measure up, that we're lacking, even that we're failures. It has other negative effects - like self-harm, eating disorders, addiction, depression.

It's hard on young women. In her book about her battle with anorexia called *Good Girls*, Hadley Freeman writes: "We see the impossible standards set for women: be smart but not ambitious; look perfect but don't be vain; don't age but don't get plastic surgery; be slim but don't be obsessed with diets; be smart but not smarter than the men around you; be pleasing and have no needs of your own. This is the nonsense women have to put up with."

She's right. Women shouldn't have to put up with it.

It's hard on young men, too. They're told that to succeed, they must be brash, buff, tough, never soft or sentimental, that women exist for their pleasure. The blogs and websites that make up what's called the manosphere tell them masculinity is all about being active: doing, achieving, overpowering, being dominant, while femininity is all about being passive: being judged, being an object, being small, smaller the better. This is enormously damaging to many young men.

Of course, we don't all have the same talents, opportunities, or looks, but we're all gifted, each of us unique, precious, irreplaceable, and the only thing that matters is seeing ourselves the way God sees us and loving ourselves the way God loves us. God saw all God had made and found it very good - and that includes every one of us. We must see the beauty, the gifts we have in abundance, and appreciate them, use them well. We need to look beyond appearances, as God does, to what truly counts. ■