



ONE BRIDE FOR SEVEN BROTHERS?

Lk 20:27-38

Gilbert and Sullivan are famous for their operettas which poke fun at important British institutions, deflating the pretensions of people who suffer from an exaggerated sense of self-importance.

Laughter is often the most effective way of dealing with such individuals. One of these popular works is *Iolanthe* which satirizes the House of Lords. The unlikely hero is being sent into Parliament to cut through all the verbiage and red tape and one of his tasks is announced: he will prick that annual blister – marriage with deceased wife’s sister! We have a similar case put to Jesus in the confrontation with the Sadducees in the gospel passage today, but in this instance the question is put in almost ridiculous terms involving one woman and seven brothers.

The point is that it was the duty of the next brother to marry the elder’s widow if he died childless, and the children from this union would be those of the dead man. This is known as levirate marriage. At a time when people did not believe in resurrection or a meaningful existence beyond death, a person survived in the memory of their children and their families. Hence the importance of remembering lists of ancestors. To be forgotten meant to become extinct. In the example given by Jesus’ opponents, each of the brothers was fulfilling his duty to the deceased one.

As we draw near to the end of the Church’s year, the theme of judgment enters our readings. Jesus tells his questioners that God will decide who is worthy of a place in the other world, it is not a simple matter of doing the right thing here and now. We have seen in recent weeks how the Lord’s standard for judging often goes against the obvious conclusion from the human point of view. His argument is that there will be no need for marriage as there will be no need for the next generation as there will be no death. His reasoning may not make much sense to us, but it is perfectly in keeping with debates between the scholars of his day. ■

DO

Think how the weather shows that the year is drawing to its close. The winter is setting in and nature seems to be dying. The liturgy is hinting at the end of time and at judgment to come. How do you picture being judged? Will the Lord add up the entries in a ledger and then decide how you have fared? Or will you throw yourself on his mercy and trust in his love for you shown by the Cross?



REFLECT

A common caricature of a certain type of theology is of scholars conducting learned debates on how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. Sometimes the more esoteric arguments which take place today can seem like the modern equivalent. This can be exasperating for people who feel that the Church (in the sense of theologians) is over-preoccupied with tiny details of meaning and arguing for the sake of arguing. The purpose of studying and teaching theology is to understand better the scriptures and the tradition of the Church and what this means for our Christian life. In this sense Tradition means what we believe, what is called the deposit (or essentials) of our faith. Customs, for example the language and performance of the liturgy or the way in which the teaching of the Church is presented are not part of the deposit of the faith.

Sorting out what is essential and what is not can be a difficult and painful exercise. The debate about mandatory celibacy of the clergy is a good example. There is room for honestly held opinions. There is an ancient saying which we might keep in mind when listening to current argument: in what is essential, there must be unity; in what is doubtful, there must be freedom; in everything, there must be charity. ■

SAY

The Lord is God, not of the dead, but of the living.

LEARN

The Sadducees were members of the aristocratic priestly families. Their theology was conservative: they did not accept Pharisee doctrines such as the resurrection of the dead, angels and spirit.

Levirate marriage meant that the next brother was obliged to marry the widow of his deceased sibling and to raise up children for him.

Those who are judged worthy is another way of saying those whom God judges worthy. It is a literary device meant to show respect for God by avoiding using the divine name.

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Thirty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday 6th November 2016

Sunday Mass Times

St Colman's Dromore	All Saints Ballela
Saturday(Vigil) 6.00pm	Sunday 10.00am
Sunday 11.30am	

Weekday Mass Times: St Colman's

Mon, Tues, Thur & Fri 9.30am: Mass
Wed: 9.30am: Rosary with Eucharist
Sat: 10-11am: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
Sat: Confessions 10-11am (First Sat of the month)

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 6: Johnny McEvoy
Kathleen McAleenan
Hugh, Mary Teresa & Hugh Jun McCusker
Sun 13: Joseph Magee
Mary Galvin
Margaret McAnarney & Members of the McCann Family, Co Cavan

Dromore Anniversaries

Sat 5: The Earl Family
Sun 6: None
Sat 12: Patrick & Lucy Delaney
James & Agnes Burns
Sun 13: None

Offertory Promise Collection £1313.84

Readers - Dromore

Sat 12: louis Boyle
Sun 13: Claire Downey

Anniversary Masses

Please place stipend in an envelope or use envelopes provided in vestry. Write the name of the deceased and date of mass on envelope. Thank You

November Dead Lists

Are available at the back of the church, please take one and return it as soon as possible.

Annaclone, Ballela & Dromore Lourdes Committee

Meeting on Mon 7th Nov at 8pm in All Saints School.

Collectors for All Saints : November

Bernard McCusker & John Doyle

Parish Draw Winners Week 26

£100	Desmond McAnearney	583
£50	Yvonne Cull	110
£30	Melvin McClenaghan	121
£20	Terry McConville	177

Ballela GAC Lotto

Lotto Numbers: 1 2 5 22
£10 winner's: Daniel McGivern & Lynn Burns
Seller's Draw: Sean Burns
Next week's Jackpot: £5000

Ballela GAC Dinner Dance

This year's Dinner Dance will take place on Sat 12th Nov in the Downshire Hotel Hilltown at 7.30pm. Tickets are £25. If you are interested in attending could you please contact a committee member. AGM will be held on Sun 20th Nov at 2pm in Ballela School. All club member to attend.

Hospice Collection

There will be a collection taken up at both churches on the weekend of **Sun 20th November** for Southern Area Hospice. 2016 marks the 27th year of Southern Area Hospice Services and this year we need to raise a staggering £2.42 million to continue providing our specialist palliative care free of charge to patients living in the Southern trust area. Please be a generous as possible. Thank You.

November – Month of The Holy Souls

Take the Short-Term Pledge for the Month of November for deceased family and friends who have gone before us marked with the sign of Faith. Many people choose to abstain from alcohol for the month of November and offer this prayerful act in honour of their deceased loved ones. You can do likewise! Take the SHORT-TERM pledge for November www.pioneerassociation.ie or contact 353 1 8749464

Small fee applies for Certificate and Emblem.

Kerygma (The Gospel Choir)

Night of Celebration praise in Newry Cathedral on Sat 19th Nov 7.30pm, doors open at 7pm. Tickets £10 available from cathedral, Veritas bookshop Newry, some tickets may be available at the door (Subject to availability) or online from <http://www.newrycathedralparish.org/>. Guest soloist for the evening is concert Harpist, Rhian Hanson, compere Bishop Ken Clarke, musical director Lorna Palmer.