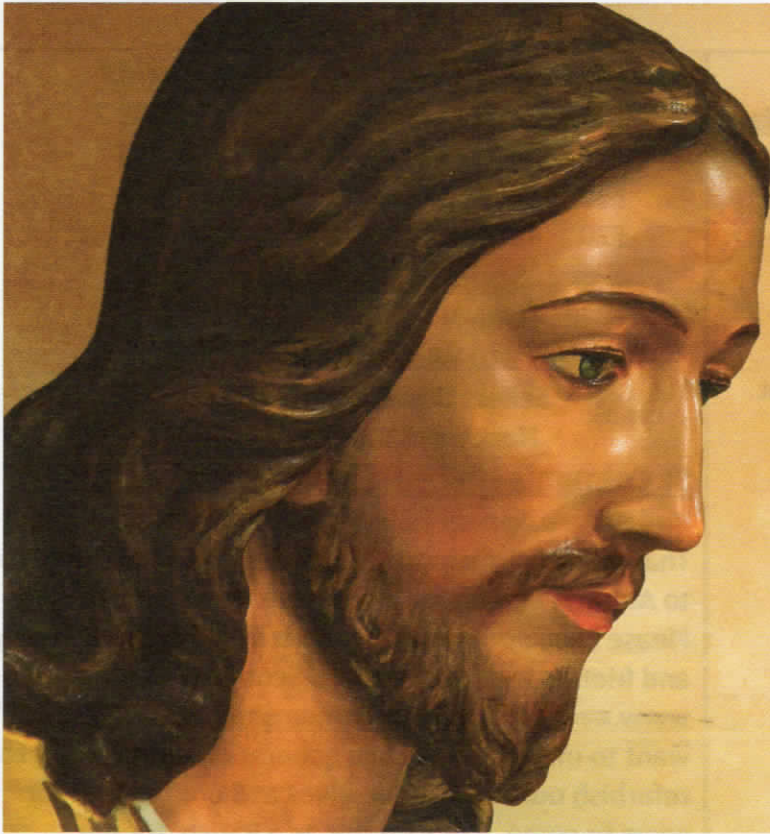


Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year A • Season Colour: Purple • Psalter Week 1



JESUS IS TESTED

MATTHEW 4:1-11

Today's gospel reading presents Jesus being tested by the devil.

The mention of the wilderness or desert and the forty days should remind us of the time the people of Israel spent in that arid and dangerous region, where they found themselves completely dependent on the Lord who had brought them out of slavery in Egypt. They were tested in terms of food, water and their proper relationship to their Lord. The answers Jesus gives to defeat the suggestions of the devil are not random quotations: they are taken from the book of Deuteronomy and from passages which refer to that threefold testing of Israel by the Lord, a test which Israel failed.

This testing follows the Baptism of Jesus, a second epiphany in which Jesus is revealed by the divine voice as "my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased". The question now is, How does Jesus understand what it means to be the Son of God? In two of the testing scenes, the devil says, "If you are the Son of God" and challenges him to perform a miracle simply to prove this. But in so doing Jesus would abuse his divine power, and his use of the texts from Deuteronomy shows that he will live by the covenant relationship which the Lord expresses as "You will be my people and I will be your God". It is an exclusive relationship, freely accepted, and the basis of Israel's belief and trust in their God. Jesus passes the test which Israel failed by relying on the word of God and all that it entailed from the covenant understanding and emphasis of Deuteronomy. In this he shows himself to be truly God's Son, the Beloved, in whom the Lord is well pleased.

It was God who tested Israel in the wilderness. We should note that it was the Spirit of God who led Jesus out into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. In a way, the devil was acting as God's agent. Jesus accepted to be tested by God as Israel was, but refused to put God to the test. In this scene we are invited to reflect on the identity of Jesus and what it means for him to be God's Son. ■

REFLECT

The testing scene occurs just before the start of Jesus' public ministry in Galilee. Jesus is presented as being single-minded in his dedication to his mission as the Son of God. He will not be taking any shortcuts to fulfil his destiny, which will find its final and clearest expression in the Cross, not in the miracles. This will be the final test, and the struggle Jesus will undergo in Gethsemane will be with a similar question: will he be the Messiah God intends? It might be worth reflecting on this aspect of the Gospel tradition, that Jesus had to struggle with this temptation to find an easier way, to conform to the popular idea of what the Messiah should be. The evangelist John presents Jesus being tested in similar but more subtle ways by the people around Jesus. The bible generally sees the tension between doing right or wrong as coming from within ourselves or from other people. ■

LEARN

It is better to describe this incident as The Testing of Jesus rather than The Temptations.

The Testing scene reveals Jesus as truly the Son of God at the beginning of his mission in Galilee.

The Book of Deuteronomy emphasises the covenant relationship between YHWH and Israel.

SAY

"People do not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Deut 8:3).

DO

Be conscious of what you are doing when you make the Sign of the Cross: the Cross is the sign of what it meant for Jesus to be the Son of God.



PARISH OF DROMORE

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First Sunday of Lent

Sunday Mass Times

St Colman's Dromore **All Saints Ballela**
Sunday 11.00am Sunday 9.45am

Weekday Mass Times: St Colman's

Mon, Wed : 9.30am: Liturgy of the Word with Eucharist

Fri: 9.30am: Stations of The Cross (during Lent)

Mass: Tues & Thur 9.30am

Sat: 10-11am: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 5: Patrick, Mary Rose, Willie, Mary & Patrick Doyle Jnr, Dechomet Mary Magee Arthur & Ailie Burns

Sun 12: None

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 5: Mary Verhoeven Sarah Bernadette Bradley Arthur & Joy Brooker Mary McKeown Annie Josephine McCrory Kathleen Aherne

Sun 12: None

Offertory Promise Collection £1305.91

Readers - Dromore

Sun 12: Grainne Killiner

Dromore, Annaclone and Ballela Lourdes

Committee Anyone wishing to travel as sick or pilgrim, contact any committee member, Pilgrim fare is £595 .If there are any nurses who are new to the Parish and would be willing to give up their time to go to work in Lourdes contact Frances Kattourah on 07894166791.

Next meeting Mon 13th March at 8.30pm in Ballela School.

Dromore Diocesan Historical Society

The society's Annual Irish Night will take place on Wed 15th March at 7.30pm in Balmoral Hotel Warrenpoint, comprising Dinner and Entertainment. This event is organized each year by Very Rev Dean Anthony Davies. Cost is £20, to book contact Dean Davies [Tel:41739484](tel:41739484) or Frank McCorry Tel: 3832294

Sunday 5th March 2017

Parish Draw Winners Week 43

£100	Peter Collins	433
£50	Bill Lennon	443
£30	Aileen Gracey	071
£20	Katie Rice	544

Ballela GAC Lotto

Lotto Numbers: 3 18 21 23

£10 Winner :Kathleen Doyle

Sellers Draw: Maureen McCusker

Next week's Jackpot: £5000

St Colman's Hall – Refurbishment

Hall Refurb Appeal - £988 of £5,000 raised

Thanks for your support so far and a special thank you to Autumn Leaves for a generous donation of £250.

Please keep spreading the word by asking your family and friends for their support. Send them to

www.everyclick.com/stcolmans to help us. We don't want to miss the once in a generation opportunity to refurbish our hall for ourselves and our families for years to come. Let's do this as a Parish, for our Parish. Please donate what you can, and don't forget to Gift Aid any donations.

The Fire Alarm system has already been installed, and the new lights will be going in this coming week.

"Fr Martin McAlinden" Acedia & The

Transformation of Spiritual Malaise

A day conference in honour of the Life and Work of Fr Martin McAlinden will take place on 16th June from 10am – 4pm in Drumalis Retreat and Conference centre, Larne. The conference will run between 10am and 2.30pm at 3pm a Graduation ceremony will be convened and an Honorary Doctorate of The University of Chester will be conferred Posthumously on Fr Martin McAlinden and presented to his family. Lunch and refreshments will be provided, donation of £25 towards cost. For further information contact Pro Wayne Morris at: w.morris@chester.ac.uk.

St Vincent De Paul

"Do you need financial or practical assistance or even a friendly chat?"

The St Vincent De Paul Society is here to help.

You can contact us through our **Helpline**

Number: 07738838187