

Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year A • Season Colour: Purple / Rose • Psalter week 4

JESUS – THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

(JOHN 9:1-41)

There are none so blind as those who will not see. This well-known proverb catches the meaning of today's Gospel reading very well.

In the longer form of the extract, we hear of the cure of a man who has been blind from birth: but rather than accept what seems to be the obvious answer, the religious authorities do everything in their power to disprove the divine origin of his being healed. In the end, they are so frustrated that they resort to insulting him and finally throwing him out. The story is about the theme of light and darkness, expressed here as seeing and being blind. The blind man and the Pharisees (also called the Jews) represent two types of people, those who accept the light offered by Jesus and those who refuse the light, who prefer to remain in the darkness. For John the evangelist, to put one's faith in Jesus is a free choice: it is a deliberate act. It is also an act of trust. But it means that the person has to be open to Jesus, and that is the difference between the characters in this brilliant and, in many ways, amusing dialogue.

In the healed man, we meet someone who is true to his own experience. He simply will not accept the arguments of the religious leaders about Jesus being a sinner because their reasoning fits neither the facts nor his understanding of God. It is this being true to himself that leads to the conflict but also to his eventual meeting Jesus and believing in him. We can see how his appreciation of the person of Jesus deepens through the dialogue: first he describes him as the man called Jesus; then as a prophet; next from God and finally, after being prepared to accept Jesus as the Son of Man, he says, "Lord, I believe", and worshipped him. He has come to believe. His story is important for those on their journey of faith this Lent. ■

REFLECT

The theme of the Fourth Gospel today is Jesus, the Light of the World. The evangelist tells us that people have to make a choice between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, life and death. We might wonder why anyone would deliberately choose the negative part, but in this story we can see that if the Pharisees accept the testimony of the healed

blind man, they will have to rethink their entire understanding of God and their own tradition. Very often, it is safer to remain as we are: it takes courage to admit that perhaps there is another way of looking at what we believe about God and the Church and to rethink ideas we have had perhaps since childhood. In any other aspect of life we have to think in a way

appropriate to our stage and state of life: unfortunately, when it comes to the faith, many people have not advanced in their understanding to a similar degree. The "vulnerable" blind man is an example to us of someone who would not be satisfied with official reasoning when it did not square with his experience. Maybe we need to ask for his courage during this time of Lent. ■

SAY

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord (Ephesians 5:8).

LEARN

The expression the Jews in the Fourth Gospel refers to the religious authorities, not to the people as a whole.

Blindness and any kind of sickness were often regarded as the result of sin, either on the part of the person affected, or by someone else.

The book of Job and other parts of the Bible challenge the official theology that misfortune is the result of sin.

DO

Remember that the keynote of today's liturgy is "Rejoice!" We are half-way to Easter. Renew your Lenten resolution and let the light of Christ penetrate the dark places of your life.

PARISH OF DROMORE

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Fourth 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

Mass: Tues & Thur 9.30am

Fri 9.30am : Stations of the Cross (During Lent)

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

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 26: James Meehan
 Jacqueline & Patrick McCusker
 Rose McAleenan

Sun 2: None

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 26: Mary Mulgrew

Sun 2: None

Offertory Promise Collection £954.79

Readers - Dromore

Sun 2: John McKeown

Confirmation

Confirmation will take place on **Sun 2nd April** in St Colmans, Dromore at 11am.

Dromore, Annaclone and Ballela Lourdes Committee

Next Meeting is on Mon 3rd April at 8.30pm in Ballela School.

Annaclone PS Easter Fayre

The annual Easter Fayre will take place on Mon 10th April from 1.00-2.30pm. Funds raised will be split between school funds and charity. Donations of raffle prizes/vouchers, hampers, good quality toys, baked items, etc are needed. Baked goods to be brought in the morning of the 10th, tea/coffee stall will be available. No books are needed and raffle tickets will be on sale from Mon 27th March at the school.

Sunday 26th March 2017

Parish Draw Winners Week 46

£100	Stephen Magee	066
£50	Nicola McKnight	597
£30	Bernie Rainey	253
£20	Kathleen McPolin	561

Ballela GAC

Pending the election of a new committee the lotto is suspended.

St Colman's Hall – Refurbishment

Hall Refurb Appeal - £3818 of £5,000 raised

Thanks for your support so far. 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. Work on floor will take place this week.

Parish Records

It is important that the Parish holds details of all members of the Parish. A full Parish Census was undertaken in 2007 and most of these details have not changed. However if you meet any of the following criteria we request that you complete a Parish Census Form which is available at the back of the church and return it to the Parish Office or place it on the collection plate.

- Joined the Parish since 2007 *or*
- Changed your address or telephone number since 2007

Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

Prayer For The Day

Lord, remove the scales from my eyes that prevent me from seeing those things that you want me to see, the darkness and shadows in my own life, that I may walk more clearly in the light of Christ.