



**JESUS,
MARY AND
JOSEPH**

Luke's account of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus is written against the background of stories and personalities from the Hebrew scriptures, which we call the Old Testament.

The source for the narrative of the presentation of the child Jesus in the Temple is the childhood of the prophet Samuel. His parents, Elkanah and Hannah are devout people, so the fact that they are childless is a bewildering misfortune. They received their son after divine intervention made conception possible, and they bring him to the shrine to present him to the Lord as they are required to by the Law. The elderly priest, Eli, accepts him and blesses the parents. Luke includes the figure of Anna, just as he will pay attention to the presence of women in the main part of his written work. Simeon and Anna represent those people who wait for the Lord and long for redemption. By placing them together, Luke tells us that *man and woman stand together and side by side before God. They are equal in honour and grace, they are endowed with the same gifts and have the same responsibilities.*

The focus of the episode is Simeon's prayer which signals that in the person of Jesus, God's promise has been fulfilled, not just for Israel, but for all peoples. God's universal care for human beings is an important theme in the Third Gospel. The fact that Jesus will be rejected is also foreshadowed in what Simeon says to Mary. The sword which will pierce Mary's soul is not that of sorrow at the crucifixion of her son (Luke does not show her as being present at the Cross) but the sword of judgment which cuts to the very being of every person to reveal who they really are. ■

SAY

May the peace of Christ reign in your heart:
May the message of Christ find a home in you.

DO

The next time you see (or hold) a child, remember that God decided to fulfil his promises by coming into our world as a baby, not for the sake of the few, or the many, but for all.

REFLECT

Many parents are deeply grieved when their children give up the practice of the faith. They ask themselves, *Where did we go wrong? What more could we have done?* The answer, usually, is that *You didn't and You couldn't have.* Everyone has to make up their own mind whether or not they believe. Not even the best-prepared and best-presented catechetical programme can guarantee that the student will graduate as a full-fledged believing Christian. There is a lot of truth in the saying that children are catechized before they are evangelized: this means that they are taught the beliefs of the community before they have decided that they actually believe in God or in the person of Jesus. That is what the sword which will pierce Mary's soul is all about: we should read the whole of the sentence which continues, *so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.* One scholar notes that *Mary, too, the model believer, will have to decide for or against God's revelation in Jesus; family ties do not create faith.* Parents, catechists and preachers can only do their best: the decision whether or not to believe rests with the individual. ■

LEARN

A frequent theme in biblical writing is that of the elderly righteous couple who have no children.

This is a literary device to highlight the importance of the child who will be born: it is found in the Hebrew bible (e.g. the parents of Samuel) and in the Christian scriptures (the parents of John the Baptist).

Childlessness was regarded as a judgment of God and often as the result of sin: hence the double tragedy in the case of a righteous and devout couple.

Blessing and cursing are connected with God's giving or withholding fertility: in the case of an aged couple without children, God is seen as being somehow responsible for the problem and then its resolution.



PARISH OF DROMORE

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Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

Sunday 31st December 2017

Sunday Mass Times

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

Weekday Mass Times: St Colman's

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

Tues & Thu 9.30am Mass

Feast of The Epiphany Of The Lord

Fri, Vigil Mass: 6pm

Sat: 10-11am: Exposition of The Blessed sacrament

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 31: John McCormac (Months Mind)

Sun 7: James McCusker, Kilkinamurry

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 31: Dominic McClure

Sun 7: Sam, Lily & Sam jnr Clarke

Hugh McGrath

James McEvoy

Offertory Promise Collection £1459.18

Readers - Dromore

Sun 7: José Calixto

Recently Deceased

Brendan Fox, Belfast

Dromore Christmas Whist

Total raised £319.00. Thanks to the following
who donated prizes:

Alderdice Fuels

Centra Banbridge

Dromore Meats

R B Heslip

Hunter & Sinton

R & J Lyness

Lurgan Veterinary

Mace

Market Bar

North Down produce

Quails

Supervalu.

Sick Visits

Sick of the parish will be visited during the week.

Collectors, All Saints – January

Parish Draw Winners Week 36

£100	Maureen Clarke	540
£50	Patricia Doherty	272
£30	Walter Stokesbury	497
£20	Mary Doyle	337

Ballela GAC Lotto

Lotto Numbers: 1 6 12 18

No £10 winners Seller: Kathleen Doyle

Next week's jackpot £1400

Club A.G.M. will take place on Mon 8th Jan 2018 in
The Anglers Rest. All fully paid up members are
encouraged to attend.

Weight watchers Class

Will resume on Monday 8th Jan 2018 at 6pm in St
Colman's hall, Dromore, tea/Coffee available and
everyone is welcome. Please contact Gearldine:
07776109903.

The Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Newry

Open day is on Sat 13th Jan from 10am – 12noon.

Admission to St Mary's Primary School

Dechomet

Children who are aged four on or before 1st July 2018
are eligible to apply for a Year One place. We also
welcome Reception pupils - children whose fourth
birthday occurs between 2nd July 2018 and 31st May
2019 may join Reception Class on or after their fourth
birthday. Last date for return of applications is
Wednesday 10th January 2018.

www.stmaryspsdechomet.com

St Colman's College Open day

The principal, staff and students would like to invite
P6 & P7 pupils, accompanied by their
parents/guardians, to our Open Day on Sat 20th Jan
2018 from 10am -1pm. Principal Cormac McKinney
will address guests at 11am and 12 noon. For further
details Tel: 02830262451, website stcolmans.org.uk.
Prospective post 16 students and their
parents/guardians are also very welcome to attend.