

THE WORD

Year B • Season Colour: Green • Psalter week 2



JESUS THE RESTORER.

The gospel tradition contains a single story of Jesus healing leprosy, though the accounts differ in the number of people cured on the one occasion.

In Mark's version there is one person mentioned, and the narrative shows Jesus in a very human, emotional light. To say that Jesus *feels sorry* for the man hardly does justice to what Jesus felt. Mark tells us that he was *moved in his very depths*, in the seat of his emotions, his heart, or another part of his anatomy which it might be better to avoid mentioning here. To suffer from leprosy was, in some ways, to endure a living death. The term covered a wide range of disorders of the skin, but because the person's skin would dry up and flake off, other people thought that they were crumbling before their eyes. Such sick people were considered unclean and so were excluded from normal society: to come into contact with a leper meant that the other person was considered unclean as well: we might call it *guilt by association*. This makes Jesus' gesture of touching the man even more impressive: it goes against all the accepted social and religious conventions of the day. Once again, Jesus gives the order not to talk about what has happened, an instruction which is not obeyed, and his fame as a healer grows, attracting large crowds. His mission seems to be going well. ■

LEARN

To suffer from leprosy meant that the person was excluded from normal social life.

To come into contact with a leper meant that the other person effectively became a leper, even if they were not physically affected

Leprosy was a blanket term, covering a wide range of skin ailments, many of them not serious.

Jesus actually says to the leper, *be cleansed!*: in this way he removes the stigma of ritual uncleanness.

SAY

Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God.

REFLECT

The story of the healing of the leper is more than Jesus' curing of a sick person. It involves the restoring of that person to normal human society. Instead of being excluded from every place where others live and gather, the person now can join in all the activities of the town or community: in this case, he has been given his life back. In some medieval churches we can still see *leper windows*: certain towns and villages had asylums for people who were afflicted with this disease, and there were windows set low in the back wall of the parish church so that they could follow the services at a safe distance from the rest of the congregation. In English, we sometimes talk about people being treated like lepers, shunned by others for one reason or another. The gospel stories are not just about Jesus and the people of his day: they also have a message for us, and often that message is uncomfortable. Perhaps Mark is asking us, *who are the lepers in your society or church?* Who are the people who are shunned, pushed to the margins? And why are they treated in this way? If Jesus was prepared to ignore the social and religious customs of his day so that he could reach a person in need of his touch, would he let the rules we have in place today stop him? There is a tendency among some people to think that the gospel criticisms of the Law, the religious practices and the leaders of the time apply only to the historical situation of Jesus and the early disciples. But the word of God has an enduring value: it applies to us and our situation today. It may well be that Jesus' healing of the leper needs to be translated into terms which apply to our time and Church. ■

DO

Is there someone whom you have been treating like a leper? If so, do something about it.



PARISH OF DROMORE

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Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday Mass Times

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

Weekday Mass Times: St Colman's

Mon - 9.30am: Liturgy of the Word with Eucharist

Tues & Thur - 9.30am : Mass

Fri – 9.30am – Stations of the cross with Eucharist

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

Ash Wednesday - Wed 14th Feb

St Colmans – 9.30am – Liturgy of the word with Eucharist and distribution of Ashes.

St Colmans – 6.30pm – Mass with distribution of Ashes.

All Saints – 7.00pm – Liturgy of the word with Eucharist and distribution of Ashes.

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 11: John Fegan

John McAnarney, Ballooleyore

Sun 18: Deceased members of the Bingham Family

Barney McCusker

Alice & Arthur Burns

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 11: Geraldine O'Loughlin

Breen Morgan

Sun 18: Patrick Murphy

Recently baptised

Conor Michael McGrath

Offertory Promise Collection £987.67

Readers - Dromore

Sun 18: Siobhan McArdle

Annaclone, Ballela & Dromore Lourdes

Committee Annual Lourdes Pilgrimage **17th to 22nd of May 2018**, Pilgrim fare £610. If anyone is wishing to travel as Sick please forward your name to any member of Lourdes Committee in order to be assessed.

Lourdes dance will take place in St Colmans Hall Dromore on **Saturday 3rd March**, music by Kevin Kearney. Lourdes fundraising tickets currently on sale, contact any member.

Sunday 11th February 2018

Parish Draw Winners Week 42

£100	Christine McDonald	247
£50	Emma Kattourah	274
£30	Peter Verhoeven	078
£20	Paula Burns	048

Ballela GAC Lotto

Lotto Numbers: 8 9 12 22

£10 winner's: Sinead Burns & David Feenan

Seller: Gary McMullan

Next week's jackpot £1580

Lenten Retreat Days in Dromantine

Dromantine is offering a retreat day during lent. This will provide time and space to reflect and pray in the peaceful environment of Dromantine on important themes of Lent and to prepare our hearts and minds to celebrate Holy Week and Easter.

Dates: Sat 17th Feb –led by Fr Aodhán McCrystal, SMA
Time: 10am -5pm. Cost: £25/30 Euros, includes lunch, tea/coffee. All are welcome.

To Book Tel: 02830821964 or email:

admin@dromantineconference.com.

Tea & Chat

Will take place in St Colmans Hall, Dromore after mass today. All welcome.

ST JOSEPH'S YOUNG PRIESTS SOCIETY

The Annual Mass for members of the Society and our Priests will be celebrated by Bishop McAreavey in the **Cathedral of SS Patrick and St Colman, Newry on Friday 16th February at 7.30pm**. This Mass will be part of the reflection and prayer activities planned during the week when the Icon for the World Meeting of Families is present within the Cathedral. All are invited to attend.

Do This In Memory

Will take place today in both churches.

Whist

Will be held in St Colmans Hall, Dromore on Sun 18th of Feb at 8.30pm. Ladies to supply pastry : Sally Doherty & Frances Kattourah

Trócaire Boxes

Are available at the back of the church. Please take one.