

Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year B • Season Colour: Purple • Psalter week 1

INTO THE WILDERNESS



Jesus has just been baptised. The voice from heaven has proclaimed: *You are my beloved son; in you I am well pleased. But how does Jesus understand this? What does it mean to be the Son of God?*

Mark tells us that Jesus was put to the test, but does not give us any details about how this might have happened. It is worth noting that this event was no accident: it is *the Spirit* who is responsible for this experience and who *drives Jesus out* to face it. It is God who is putting Jesus to the test.

In a way, this is also the experience of the disciples of Jesus. They have already taken his message to heart: they have changed their attitudes (repented) and accepted the Good News. They have publicly declared this inner change by being baptised, and through this ritual have been adopted as God's beloved children. But this will not spare them being tested or undergoing trials, any more than it did Jesus. Mark often links the Gospel with the person of Jesus: Jesus embodies the message. His experience of the power of God in suffering and rejection through to the resurrection is the way presented to the disciple, then and now. The desert or wilderness may well be the place where the person is tested and fails, as in the story of Israel on the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, but it also the place where the damaged relationship can be restored: it represents also a time of special closeness and intimacy between the Lord and the people of Israel. ■

DO

Choose something to do for Lent which will help to remind you daily of God's love for you: How you can better return that love in your personal relationship with the Lord?

SAY

The time has come: the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

REFLECT

The Gospels do not simply tell the story of Jesus: they mirror also the experience of the community from which they emerge. An important theme in the First Gospel, the gospel of Mark, is that of *discipleship*, what it means to be a follower of Jesus. In our reading today, which sets the scene for our liturgical season of Lent, we are told that baptism may be the end of the initial period of conversion, but it is also the beginning of a lifetime commitment, and that the newly-baptised person should expect to be put to the test in one way or another. In the Gospel tradition, Jesus has to face up to what it means to be the Son of God, and the struggle will be repeated at Gethsemane when the final test, the Passion, is about to begin.

At the beginning of Lent, we are invited to take up some practice of penance. For many of us, this is the firing-gun for a marathon ordeal, at the end of which we will feel pleased with ourselves for keeping our resolutions or a failure for not having done so. But that is not the point. The purpose of fasting is to heighten our spiritual awareness: the less the body has to do, the more the mind or spirit can function. This can be a rather uncomfortable experience: we are brought face to face with ourselves and what we are really like. But the purpose of Lent is to bring us closer to God, so that we may become more *his beloved children*. Then Easter will truly be a time of rebirth, a real cause for celebration. ■

LEARN

The term the *temptations of Jesus* is better understood as Jesus being tested.

The mention of *wilderness and forty* is meant to remind us of Israel in the desert: Israel was put to the test and failed.

Wild beasts are associated in the bible with evil powers.

Angels also minister to Elijah in the wilderness at Mount Horeb (Sinai).

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 - 9.30am: Liturgy of the Word with Eucharist
Tues & Thur - 9.30am : Mass
Wed – 7pm : Mass (During Lent)
Fri – 9.30am – Stations of the cross with Eucharist
Sat - 10-11am: Exposition of The Blessed sacrament
Sun - 7-8pm –Prayer Meeting, reflection and Eucharistic adoration will be held in Parochial house during lent. Everyone welcome.

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 18: Deceased members of the Bingham Family
Barney McCusker
Alice & Arthur Burns
Robert & Margaret Ann Lavery &
Robert Jnr & Deceased members of the Lavery Family.

Sun 25: None

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 18: Patrick Murphy
Sun 25: Gerard Keenan

Recently baptised

Lily Martha Burns

Recently Deceased

Gladys Margaret Walsh, Iniscarn Pkh, Lisburn

Offertory Promise Collection £1011.19

Readers - Dromore

Sun 25: Brendan McCann

Women's World Day of Prayer

Will be held in Dromore Methodist Church, Maypole Hill, at 8pm on Fri 2nd March. This is an interdenominational service and we would encourage the ladies in our parish to attend.

Sunday 18th February 2018

Parish Draw Winners Week 43

£100	Gareth Marks	173
£50	Maureen Clarke	540
£30	Terence Mackin	160
£20	Maureen McCusker	374

Ballela GAC Lotto

Lotto Numbers: 13 16 18 20

No £10 winner's

Seller: Kevin Close

Next week's jackpot £1610

Ballela Community Group

AGM meeting will be held in Tues 27th Feb at 7pm in Ballela School. New members very welcome.

Assumption Grammar School

Annual Concert will take place on Sun 4th march at 4.30pm. This is to celebrate the school's 85th Anniversary and will be held in The Waterfront Hall. Tickets available from school reception
Tel – 02987562250

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

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.

Committee meeting **Mon 19th Feb** at 8.30pm

Romero Heartbeat of El Salvador

RISE Theatre presents a new, original play about the life of Blessed Oscar Romero in Bannside Presbyterian Church, Castlewellan Rd, Banbridge on Thur 1st March at 7.30pm. Suggested donation £10.