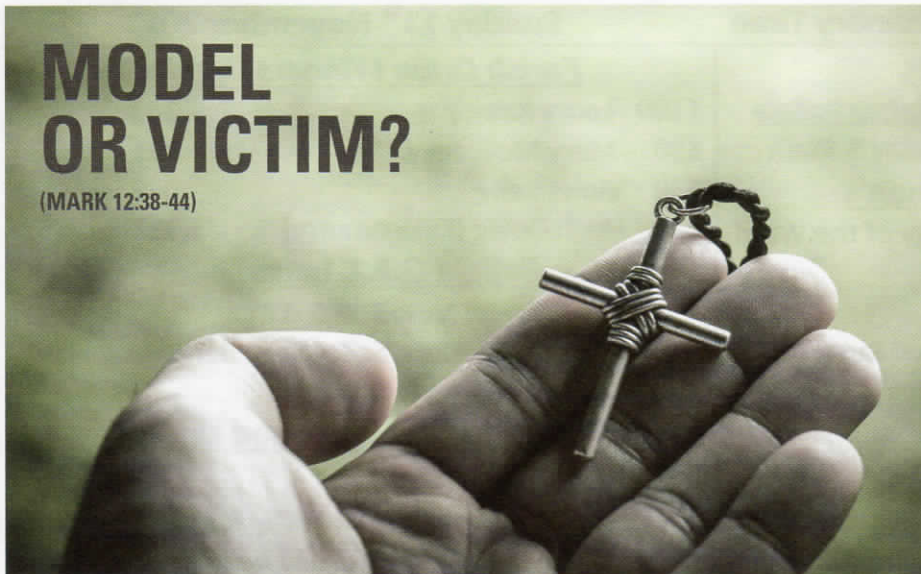


MODEL OR VICTIM?

(MARK 12:38-44)



Widows are mentioned twice in our Gospel passage today. In the first section, Jesus criticises the scribes who show off in public by the manner of their dress and demeanour. Then he takes them to task over enriching themselves at the expense of some of the most poor and vulnerable members of the community. They are guilty not only of exhibitionism but also of hypocrisy.

The figure of the widow returns when Jesus and his disciples observe the way people contribute to the upkeep of the temple. The usual interpretation of Jesus' remarks about the woman putting in "all she had to live on" is that he is commending her for her piety and generosity. But this may not be the case. The temple and its clergy are not presented in a positive light in Mark's account of the Gospel. One of the characteristics of the prophetic books of the Bible is a suspicion of institutionalised religion, and those preachers often excoriate the place and its ministers for persuading poor people, like the woman in this scene, to part with the little they had. So should the widow have put in what she gave to the treasury? Is Jesus holding her up as a model of the 'poor but pious' people so beloved of a certain type of Lives of the Saints? Or is he presenting her as the victim of a system which is interested primarily in its own wealth and status? Is Jesus thus indirectly condemning the temple, which he had already described as a "den of thieves"? There is no way of answering the question definitively, but there is sufficient evidence to make it a real possibility. ■

SAY

The Lord cares about the widow and orphan.

LEARN

The scribes were educated individuals who could function as administrators, lawyers and theologians as they were well-versed in the Law.

The scribes are (mainly) presented as the opponents of Jesus along with the chief priests and elders.

These groups are mainly political figures whose power base is the temple.

The Pharisees do not figure alongside these groups in the Passion narrative.

DO

Take an interest in how your parish is run. Examine the financial statement. Discuss with other parishioners the question of mission or maintenance and the reason why your parish should exist. What should its purpose be?



REFLECT

One of the problems with reading reports of what a person has said is that we cannot be sure of the tone of voice in which she or he is speaking. This is certainly true of the remarks of Jesus to his disciples concerning the action of the poor widow. Is he talking in a way that suggests praise, holding up the woman as an example for others to emulate? Or is he outraged at the way advantage is being taken of a devout and trusting person?

Organised religion is always in danger of becoming more concerned with its own structures and needs, and of losing sight of its proper purpose. The tension between the ways of understanding the church in terms of maintenance or mission is always with us – or should be. What Jesus and the prophets say is uncomfortable and is meant to be disturbing, calling on the leaders of the community to examine their consciences and to treat people with respect for their individual circumstances. The way the

chest for the offerings was constructed meant that the coins went in with a distinct clatter, so it was possible to have an idea of how much an individual had contributed. The widow's couple of copper coins would have made a faint sound, but perhaps Jesus heard in that a resounding condemnation of a religious system which was more concerned about position and profit than being a means by which people could reach their God. What was true for the religion of Jesus' day is valid for ours now. ■

PARISH OF DROMORE

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Diocesan Safeguarding Officer: Patricia Carville 07789 917741

Thirty - Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sunday 11th November 2018

Sunday Mass Times

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

Weekday Mass Times: St Colman's

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

Tues & Fri : Mass – 9.30am

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

Weekday Mass times: All Saints

Thursday – 7.00pm

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 11: Margaret McAnarney & members of The McCann Family, Co-Cavan. Joseph Magee

Sun 18: None

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 11: Patrick & Lucy Delaney

Sun 18: None

Offertory Promise Collection £884.31

Readers - Dromore

Sun 18: Colin Skillen

Do This In Memory

"Week 2" will take place in All Saints, Ballela today, Sunday 11th Nov.

Santa Returns to Dromantine

7/8/9 & 14/15/16 December. Early booking advisable as spaces are limited book online now at www.dromantineconference.com also Craft Fair on Sunday 9th from 12 – 5pm.

Battle's Over, A National tribute, 11th Nov 2018

St Colmans Church, will take part in an event to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War 1. A tribute to everyone who served on the battlefields, the high seas and the home front. At 7.05pm on Sun 11th Nov the church bell will ring out for Peace.

Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving

For parents & families who have been bereaved through pregnancy loss & the death of a baby or child in Daisy Hill Hospital, Sun 18th Nov at 3pm in Newry Town Hall. Bring a flower for the tribute.

Parish Draw Winners Week 31

£100	Laura Rainey	243
£50	Mary McGreevy	093
£30	Violet Kelly	046
£20	Hugh Doyle (Kilkinamurry)	391

Ballela G.A.C Lotto

Fri 9th Nov: 3 4 5 17

No £10 winners. Seller Sean Burns
Jackpot £2000

Special Mass for the Deceased since:

31-10-2017

A Mass to commemorate and pray for the deceased of our parish since Nov 2017 will be held in both churches on **Sun 18th Nov** at normal mass time. The following is a list from our parish records of those who have died. Please let us know if there is anyone from our parish who has died and is not on the list: John McCormac, Mary Elizabeth Keenan, Mary Caulfield, Brendan Fox, John Donaldson, Margaret Gladys Walsh, Laurence McDonald, Esme Gilmore, Johnny Doyle, Mary Beins & Lily Lennon. A candle will be brought to the alter during mass by a member of the bereaved family and this candle can be placed on the grave after mass.

N.I. Blood Transfusion Service

The next blood donation session will be held in the Cathedral Church Hall, Dromore on Wed 14th Nov 2pm – 4pm & 5.15pm – 8pm. In order to maintain the vital supply of blood to our hospitals, the NI Blood Transfusion Service needs the support not only of existing donors but also of new donors.

Whist

Whist will be held in St Colmans hall Dromore on Sun 18th Nov at 8.30pm. Ladies to supply pastry: Siobhan McArdle & Margaret Downey.

Autumn Leaves - Thank You Autumn Leaves would like to thank everyone who attended the recent dance in Aid of NI Air Ambulance or gave a donation. The total amount raised was **£1207.00**.

Daughters of Charity

Wish to thank the parishioners of Dromore for their recent Mission Appeal. Total raised after converting to Euro: € 859.11.