

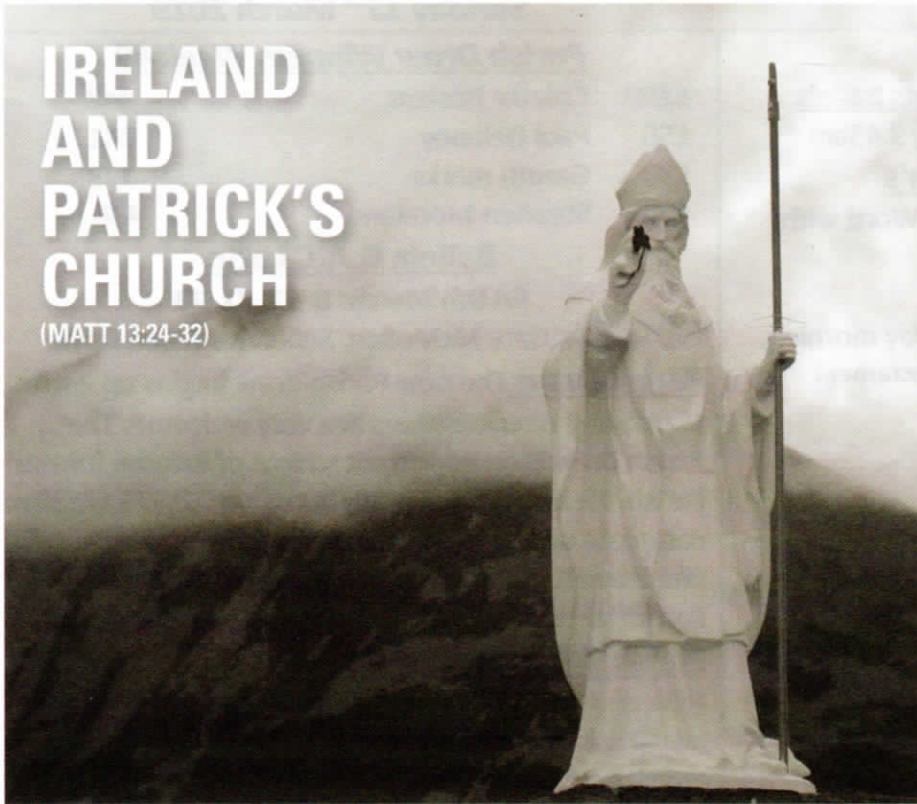
Sunday Message

THE WORD

Year C • Season Colour: White • Psalter Week 2

IRELAND AND PATRICK'S CHURCH

(MATT 13:24-32)



The Gospel for today's feast of St Patrick presents us with two parables about the Kingdom of God. In the first example, known generally as the *Weeds in the Wheat*, we are confronted with the question of what to do about people who do not seem to conform to the rules or standards expected of members of the community.

There are two problems: first of all, while the plants are growing, it is very difficult to distinguish the weeds from the good shoots. Secondly, to try to root out the unwanted stems will result in untold damage to the seed-bearing plants, which will either be trampled or uprooted as well. Jesus counsels patience and tolerance: there will be a judgment eventually – better leave it to God.

The second parable is usually interpreted as the Kingdom growing from small beginnings into something glorious, encompassing people from all over the world. The image of the mustard seed is taken from the vision of Ezekiel, when the prophet looks to the restoration of the ruined people of Israel after their exile in Babylon. ■

LEARN

The weeds in the first parable only reveal themselves as such when harvest time comes.

The parables are intended to cause us to reflect on our attitudes.

They are meant to help us to think as Jesus thinks.

The Kingdom of God is not to be identified with the church.

DO

Take time to think quietly about the current state of the church in Ireland, the church founded by St Patrick. Could you see the crises of recent years as the Lord shaking up the church and its leaders? Could you see this as a time of purification, leading to a humbler, more tolerant community of disciples?

REFLECT

The Kingdom of God is not identical with the church. However, the parables of the Kingdom are often applied to the church, and if we follow this practice there may well be food for thought in the two images which the Gospel puts before us today. In the church's history, there have been attempts to root out what some people in authority regard as heresy, that is, dangerous teachings which may lead the (apparently simple) faithful astray. The Inquisition is one example of this. In more recent times respectable scholars have been silenced, forbidden to teach, but often that judgment has been reversed and their suspension lifted. In the meantime, their work and reputation have been trampled upon, and their commitment to the Lord and the church disparaged. This happens due to the exaggerated zeal of some who, like the servants in the parable, think that they should simply root out views they perhaps do not understand, instead of engaging in a healthy and life-giving discussion.

The second parable is in some ways a puzzle. The mustard seed does not, in fact, grow into a great tree. If we apply this to the church, perhaps Jesus is saying that his church should not be a great and magnificent institution like the enormous and splendid cedar of Lebanon, but something humble, one shrub among many in the garden. Maybe Jesus has not made a mistake in his botany: he may well be turning the vision of Ezekiel on its head.

It would be an understatement to say the church has been going through a series of crises in recent years, but these crises are of human origin. Is the revealing of the various cover-ups the Lord's way of cutting the institution down to size, of showing that the church as an organisation is not the Kingdom, or that the leaders of the community should be patient, tolerant, humble, and take Jesus and his attitude as their example? ■

SAY

Come, Holy Spirit, and renew the face of our church.

PARISH OF DROMORE

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St Patrick's Day

Sunday Mass Times

St Colman's Dromore All Saints Ballela

Sunday 11.00am Sunday 9.45am

Weekday Mass Times: St Colman's

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

Mass - Tues & Fri : 9.30am

Stations of the cross after mass on Friday morning.

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

Weekday Mass times: All Saints

Thursday - 7.00pm

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 17: Robert & Margaret Ann Lavery & Robert Lavery jnr

Sun 24: Jimmy Devlin

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 17: Larry McDonald
Patrick McGreevy

Sun 24: None

Offertory Promise Collection £996.65

Readers - Dromore

Sun 24: Aileen Gracey

Recently Baptised Jude Malachy Dennison.

Recently Deceased

Mary Lavery, Victoria gardens, Banbridge.

"Listen to Him!"

On the Second Sunday of Lent, the gospel is traditionally the story of the Transfiguration of the Lord. Just as the glimpse of Jesus in glory gave strength to Peter, James and John to follow him on the way to Jerusalem and his crucifixion, so also it offers us encouragement in our Lenten discipline as we seek to follow the Lord's words.

The John Paul II Award

The following students from Dromore Parish will be receiving the Award on Wed 20th March at 7.30pm at St Teresa's Church, Banbridge: Ryan Hamilton, Conor Mulgrew & Emma McEntee.

Blood Transfusion Service

The next blood donation session will be held in Cathedral Church Hall, Dromore on **Wed 27th March** 2pm - 4pm & 5.15pm - 8pm.

Sunday 17th March 2019

Parish Draw Winners Week 49

£100	Colette Haslem	442
£50	Paul Delaney	341
£30	Gareth marks	173
£20	Stephen Moreland	436

Ballela G.A.C Lotto

Fri 8th March: 8 12 21 23

£10 winner Gary McMullan. Seller: Kathleen Doyle

Parish Draw The new Parish draw begins on 23rd March and new members are very welcome. The Parish draw is an important source of income for the Parish. Please contact Mary Burns on 07917517520 or complete one of the forms at the back of the church and leave it in the collection basket or at the Parochial House. Cost is £1 per week for 50 weeks.

Parish Offertory Envelopes

New envelopes are now available at the back of the church. If you are new to the Parish or do not use envelopes, please complete one of the forms (yellow) at the back of the church and leave it in the collection basket or at the Parochial house. If you are a UK tax payer and would like to Gift Aid your contribution, please complete a Gift Aid Declaration (pink form) which is also available at the back of the church.

Lourdes Committee

Annual Lourdes Pilgrimage 21st - 26th May 2019, Pilgrim fare £660. If you wish to travel as a pilgrim or If anyone is wishing to travel as sick please forward your name to any committee member.

Coffee Morning

The Lourdes committee are holding a coffee morning on **Sun 24th March** in St Colman's Hall 10am - 1pm during which the Annual Draw will take place. Meeting **Mon 18th March 8.30pm** Ballela school.

Via Wings annual Ladies conference

Will be held on **sat 23rd march 10am - 4.30pm** in Wellington House, 9-13 princes Street, Dromore. Tickets are limited/ light lunch included. Tickets £16. This year's guest speakers are going to be Priscilla Reid & Lucy Hill. Tickets available at Wellington House or online at: www.buytickets.at/viawings/227080 or call 02892698378.

St Vincent de Paul Can we help you? Do you know of any lonely individuals or anyone in financial difficulties within the local parish who can benefit from a friendly visit or assistance/ Helpline number 07738838187