

# Sunday Message

## THE WORD

Year C • Season Colour: Purple • Psalter Week 3

The first part of our Gospel reading today reflects a common doctrine of retribution which teaches that good behaviour is rewarded and sin is punished – in this life.

As in other places in the gospel tradition, Jesus mentions but does not question this understanding. The two physical disasters referred to are not described anywhere else, but Pilate was certainly capable of ruthless action. The call to repent, to change one's outlook and manner of life is made to everyone: everyone, therefore, is a sinner. Jesus tells his audience not to assume that they are less in need of repentance just because nothing so calamitous has happened to them. Jesus' death on the cross in Jerusalem, where Siloam is situated, will be such a scandal precisely because it can be seen as a punishment for sin.

Death brings judgment. One aspect of these two tragedies is that they were unexpected, and those who were killed had no time to prepare themselves. This introduces an urgent note: people should not put off accepting the word of Jesus the prophet.

The parable of the fig tree softens this message somewhat: it suggests that people still have time to sort themselves out. But this period is not unlimited, and if the Lord finds them wanting at his coming, then they will be cut off. The word of the prophet demands an answer: to delay accepting the message and its consequences will be regarded as a negative reply and treated accordingly. ■

### LEARN

Pilate was a cruel and ruthless ruler, quite capable of ordering the kind of massacre which is mentioned in today's Gospel reading.

No other Gospel writer mentions this slaughter of Galileans at worship.

*Siloam* is the name of a pool in Jerusalem. It is mentioned in the Fourth Gospel.

The Book of Deuteronomy teaches that good is rewarded and sin is punished: this is known as the Doctrine of Retribution.

### SAY

The Lord is compassion and love.

## REPENT – OR ELSE (?)

(LUKE 13:1-9)



### REFLECT

The word of God is alive and active: it speaks to us today when we listen to it being read in church or read it quietly for ourselves. The purpose of today's reading is not to frighten us into being outwardly good for fear of being caught unawares, then finding ourselves being held to account in some divine court. It is perhaps a reminder that we should not take life and time for granted. In a society where life expectancy seems to lengthen all the time, we may be inclined to think that we have plenty of time ahead of us.

Today's Gospel is not telling us that we should live in an atmosphere of impending doom: rather this time of Lent is a yearly opportunity to examine our lives and attitudes. We might reflect on the second part, that of the landowner inspecting the fig tree, and be relieved that in Luke's version of the story, the fig tree is not cursed or cut down immediately, but is given another chance. We should take this seriously. Jesus tells us that it is not enough simply to acknowledge him as Lord, but that we should be ready to receive him whenever he comes and knocks at our door. We will be ready if we are truly his disciples, living by our Master's teachings, not out of fear or punishment or hope of reward, but out of loving commitment to our Saviour. The drawback with acting out of fear is that it wears off and the person slips back. Love is the key to the covenant relationship, and Lent is the time when we are asked to look at our relationship with the Lord and to prepare in a meaningful way to celebrate his love for us revealed in the Easter mystery. ■

### DO

Remember that the three practices of Lent are prayer, fasting and almsgiving (in that order). Is your Lenten penance making the Lord nearer to you in your daily life? If your penance only makes you more conscious of yourself, it is not too late to choose something more appropriate.



## PARISH OF DROMORE

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### Third 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, Wed & Thurs** - 9.30am: Liturgy of the Word  
with Eucharist

**Mass – Mon** 7.00pm              **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 24:** Jimmy Devlin  
James Meehan

**Sun 31:** None

#### Dromore Anniversaries

**Sun 24:** Michael Canavan , Strabane

**Sun 31:** Mary Muigrew

Offertory Promise Collection £1324.42

#### Readers - Dromore

**Sun 31:** Grainne Killiner

#### Feast of the Annunciation, 25<sup>th</sup> March

Mary is the model disciple who accepts God's word and becomes the mother of Jesus. During Lent we strive to listen to God's word so that we become the hands and face of Jesus in our time and place. To celebrate this feast, there will be an additional mass on Mon 25<sup>th</sup> at 7.00pm in St Colman's Dromore.

#### Trócaire

Today at both Masses we welcome Siobhan Hanley a speaker from Trócaire. The focus this year will be on the different ways land is stolen from vulnerable people around the world and how their work and support is making a difference. It is also an opportunity to personally thank the parish for the generous support they have shown to Trócaire over the years.

#### Blood Transfusion Service

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

### Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2019

#### Parish Draw Winners Week 50

£500	Keli Haslem	432
£500	M McClenaghan	119

#### 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 21<sup>st</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> 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 24<sup>th</sup> March** in St Colman's Hall 10am – 1pm during which the Annual Draw will take place.

#### The Benedictine Monks, Rostrevor Co. Down,

Invite men (18-40) to an Easter Triduum Retreat from Holy Thursday 18th April until Sunday 20th April 2019. Take time to reflect. Examine your life and consider your call. If interested, please contact: Fr Thierry: [benedictinemonks@btinternet.com](mailto:benedictinemonks@btinternet.com) / +44 (0)28 4173 9979 Facebook: Benedictine Monks Rostrevor / Twitter: @rostrevormonks