

# GO ON: THROW THAT STONE!

(JOHN 8:1-11).



There are several occasions in the Gospel story in which Jesus' opponents lay a trap for him. They employ the familiar device of asking for a simple Yes/No answer to a question which may be far more complicated.

Today's apparently innocent request for his opinion about the punishment due to the guilty woman has echoes of the question about paying tribute to Caesar: whatever answer Jesus gives, it will get him into trouble either with the Romans or with certain sections of his own people.

It is clear that this episode rests on bad faith: John tells us that it is a test. Whatever the actual background, it seems that this is not a case of genuine legal doubt but of an imminent lynching. Jesus' opponents may well have the letter of the Law on their side, but not its spirit. It is extremely, perhaps suspiciously, convenient for the prosecutors that the woman in question has been caught in such a way that the legal requirement for two witnesses can be fulfilled: it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that she is the victim of a set-up by her husband. Jesus is rejecting the unjust process by which this woman has been brought to the brink of execution. He has said just before this that he judges no-one: this story illustrates his teaching perfectly. ■

## REFLECT

We can all appreciate the injustice of this scene, particularly the fact that the man involved does not have to share in the punishment. We can deplore the connivance of the judges, witnesses and perhaps of the husband in this perversion of due process. But we are all caught up to some degree in the court of public opinion where people can be accused, tried and condemned with no chance of defending themselves. We can also become frustrated with politicians and others who will not answer a simple question but bluster their way through a reply which is no answer at all. Point-scoring becomes the purpose of debate.

In all of this, truth is the real casualty. Some questions can be answered Yes or No. Others are not so simple. The woman's accusers do not seem to be interested in the real purpose of the Law, or whether she is sorry for her actions, and she is certainly being given no opportunity to put things right.

This is the danger of fundamentalism of any sort. In the Christian setting, it usually involves the lifting of biblical references out of their context and interpreting them literally. This normally applies to sexual matters: the clear and critical message of the prophets about cheating workers, accumulating wealth and land at the expense of others does not usually receive the same attention or emphasis. When we hear someone declare that *the Bible says...*, then we should be on our guard, as the biblical text is the Word of God, written by human authors according to their own culture and background. What we need to do is to apply the *spirit* of the Bible to our own time and place. ■

## SAY

Who am I to judge?

## LEARN

There are two authors involved in the writing of Biblical text: These are the Holy Spirit and the human author.

## DO

Pick up a stone. Look at it. Put yourself in the scene from today's Gospel. Would you throw it at the woman? What about other people in your life: do you throw stones (metaphorically) at them?

The inspired text of the Bible is the original text written in Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek.

No translation of the Bible is divinely inspired.



# PARISH OF DROMORE

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## Fifth 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 & Fri** - 9.30am: Liturgy of the Word with Eucharist

**Mass - Tues** : 9.30am

Stations of the cross after Liturgy of word on Friday morning.

**9.30am - 10-11am**: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

### Weekday Mass times: All Saints

**Thursday** - 7.00pm

### Ballela Anniversaries

**Sun 7:** John, Mary & Jack Cunningham

**Sun 14:** Vera Beeton, William & Christina Beeton  
Kathleen McGregor

### Dromore Anniversaries

**Sun 7:** Anne Prentice

Patricia Wilson

**Sun 14:** None

Offertory Promise Collection £969.70

### Readers - Dromore

**Sun 14:** Brendan McCann

### Recently Baptised

Benjamin Kirk

### Holy Week (14<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> April)

We begin Holy Week with Palm Sunday and the blessing of palms at each mass. We invite the children making their First Holy Communion to be part of the entrance procession with the blessed palms. Our ceremonies during Holy Week will take place as follows:

**Holy Thursday:** Mass of the Lord's Supper at 6.00 pm in St Colman's, Dromore

**Good Friday:** Commemoration of the Lord's Passion at 3.00 pm in St Colman's, Dromore.  
Stations of the Cross at 3.00 pm in Ballela and at 7.00 pm in St Colman's, Dromore

**Holy Saturday:** Vigil of the Lord's Resurrection at 9.00 pm in St Colman's, Dromore

**Easter Sunday:** masses at the usual Sunday times.

## Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2019

### Parish Draw Winners Week 2

£100	Katie McAnarney	545
£50	Jeanette Adair	148
£30	Katie Rice	544
£20	Louise McEntee	152

### Ballela G.A.C Lotto

Sun 24<sup>th</sup> March : 4 14 15 23

No £10 winners Seller : Sean Burns

Jackpot £2000

Draw will take place in Doyle's bar every Sunday.

### Ballela Community Group

Meeting Mon 8<sup>th</sup> April at 8.00pm

### Messy Children's Liturgy (Easter Activity)

Exploring the Easter Story with crafts for children and their families from 10.30am on Good Friday morning in Ballela School.

### Annadone Ballela & Dromore Lourdes

#### committee: Annual Draw Winners

1<sup>st</sup> - £200 - Peter McEvoy

2<sup>nd</sup> - £100 - Ann Casey

3<sup>rd</sup> - £50 - Gerard Magee

4<sup>th</sup> - £25 - Enda Brady

5<sup>th</sup> - £25 - Jamie Doyle

### Do This In Memory

Will take place in both churches on:

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April ( Week 7)

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April (Week 8).

### Tea and Chat

Will take place in St Colman's hall on Sun 14<sup>th</sup> April and Sun 28<sup>th</sup> April after mass. Everyone welcome.

### Confessions in Holy Week

In St Colman's Dromore on:

Holy Thursday - 5.00 - 5.45 pm

Good Friday - 4.00 - 5.00 pm

Holy Saturday - 10.00am - 11.00 am