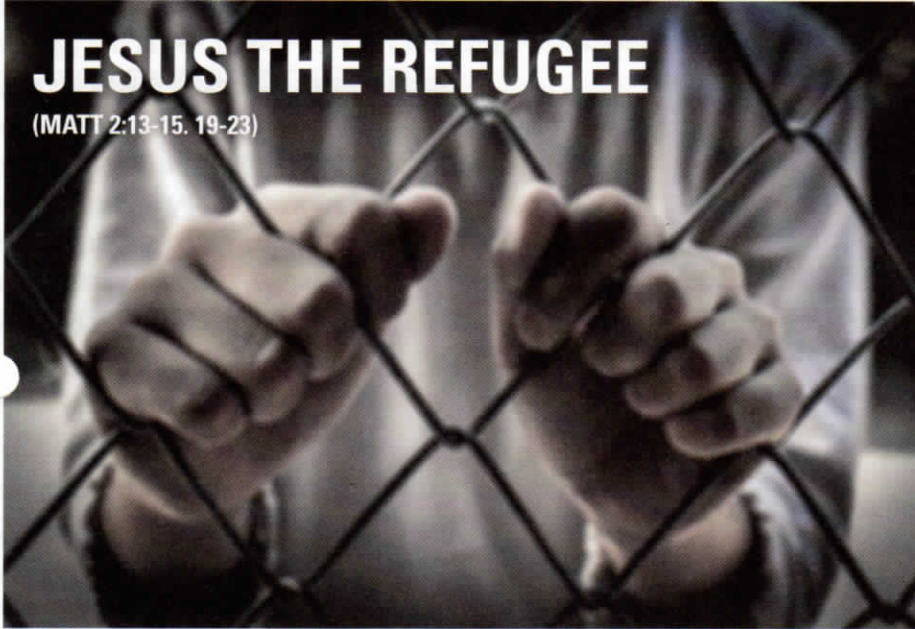


## JESUS THE REFUGEE

(MATT 2:13-15, 19-23)



Matthew is writing for a community which is made up mainly of Jewish Christians: he is anxious to show that the Gospel story is the fulfilment of God's promises and actions as recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. He often uses expressions such as "In this way the words spoken through the prophets were to be fulfilled."

Today, there are echoes of the Genesis story of Joseph, where Egypt is the place of safety (not of slavery, as is its usual sense). Like Moses, Joseph acts under God's instructions, communicated here in dreams and by angels; like Moses, he can return to his own land when those who sought to kill (in this case Jesus) are dead. Like the Israelites in Exodus, he returns from Egypt. It seems that in Matthew's version, Joseph and Mary were living in Bethlehem to begin with, as the evangelist notes that Joseph was afraid to go back to his own place because of possible danger from the son of Herod the Great who was now king in the place of his father: so he settled in a town called Nazareth, the town in the north, in Galilee, from which tradition tells us Jesus came.

The first two chapters of Matthew present the themes which we will encounter in his version of the story of Jesus throughout this liturgical year: they are sometimes called the Gospel in miniature. The Exodus will form a prominent background to our readings, setting the story of Jesus firmly in the tradition of the Jewish Scriptures which we call the Old Testament. ■

### SAY

You should be clothed in sincere compassion  
(Colossians 3:12)

### LEARN

Matthew is writing his Gospel for a community of mainly Jewish Christians.

The evangelist wants to show that the ministry and passion of Jesus are in accord with God's plan.

This is shown by fulfilment quotations from the Jewish Scriptures.

### DO

When next you see a news item about refugees, say to yourself, "Jesus, Mary and Joseph have been through that sort of experience."



Yemeni children in refugee camp in Yemen

## REFLECT

One of the distressing features of life at the present time is the number of people who find themselves displaced from their homes due to war, conflict, famine and natural disasters. The risks they take by undertaking long and dangerous journeys during which they can be taken advantage of by unscrupulous criminals illustrate their desperation: setting out to cross open water in inadequate and overcrowded vessels is a measure of their determination to survive and find a better life for their families.

There is no denying that coping with refugees poses problems for the countries in which they arrive. But to characterise such people as scroungers looking for an easy life is hardly the Christian response. Today's Feast of the Holy Family presents Jesus, Mary and Joseph as refugees fleeing what might be described in today's terms as ethnic cleansing. A possible threat to a tyrannical ruler is met with what we would call state-sponsored murder. Hardly the idyllic existence imagined in many holy pictures.

The letter to the Hebrews tells us that Christ has experienced everything we have known except sin. Our celebration today of the Holy Family presents us with Christ enduring danger, an attempt on his life and fleeing to a foreign land for safety. The Lord we worship knows what it is to be a refugee. We might remember that when next we see such a situation on our news bulletins. ■

## PARISH OF DROMORE

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St Vincent de Paul Helpline: 07738838187

Rev Dr Frank Rice, Permanent Deacon  
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Diocesan Safeguarding Officer: Patricia Carville 07789 917741

### The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 2019

#### Sunday Mass Times

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

#### Weekday Mass Times : St Colman's

Mon, & Thur: Liturgy of the word 9.30am  
Tues & Fri : Mass 9.30am  
New Year's Day: Mass 10am  
Sat: 10-11am: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

#### Weekday Mass times: All Saints

Thurs : 7.00pm

#### Ilela Anniversaries

Sun 29: None

Sun 5: None

#### Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 29: None

Wed 1: Dominic McClure

Sun 5: James McEvoy

Deceased members of The Keenan family

#### Offertory Promise Collection £976.30

#### Readers – Dromore

Sun 29: Claire Downey

#### Recently Deceased

Ann Cappa, Wyncroft Cres, Lisburn

#### Recently Baptised

Darcy Gail Doran

Meresa Finney

#### Dromore Christmas Whist

Dromore Christmas Whist raised £236.00 for Parish funds, thanks to: Gambles Undertakers, The Market Bar, Dromore Meats, Rooney Meats, Supervalu, Lurgan Veterinary, RB Heslip and R&J Lyness who kindly donated prizes.

#### St Colman's College Open Day

Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Jan from 10am – 1pm. Principal's Address 11am & 12 noon.

#### The Abbey Grammar School Open Day

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> Jan from 10am – 12.30pm.

#### Sick Visits

The sick of the parish will be visited as follows:  
Tues – Dromore & Wed – Ballela

#### Parish Draw Winners Week 40

£500 Linda Hudson      092  
£500 Paul Crothers      553

#### Pilgrimages - The Camino and Lourdes

Pilgrimages for young adults (18 to 30+)

**Lourdes** -12th to 17th May - Costs £610 cover flights, full board accommodation, transfers, insurance and Lourdes programme.

**Camino a Pilgrimage walk in Spain** - July 19th to 25th - cost approx. £480 include, flights, accommodation, insurance, transfers and walkers support. **Choose your pilgrimage** - either a great way to get to know likeminded people, travel and to grow in faith in a very new way.....to secure your place forward a deposit of £200 to the Diocesan Youth Office, 39 - 41 Hill Street, Newry, BT341AT. Cheque payable to the Diocese of Dromore Trust - Youth. For more information email [dromoreyd@btconnect.com](mailto:dromoreyd@btconnect.com) or phone Frances 028 30833898

#### Armagh Archdiocesan Pilgrimage to Fátima

7<sup>th</sup> July for 7 nights led by Archbishop Eamon Martin. Cost £719 per person sharing: fully escorted pilgrimage, flights from Dublin to Lisbon, Full Board in Hotel Averida, complimentary travel Insurance, single room supplement £25 per night. Coach from selected locations to Dublin airport. For further details contact Maureen or Joe McLoughlin on 02890701606 or 07745093530.

## THANK YOU

A grateful Thank You to all who helped throughout the year, counters, collectors, Ministers Eucharist/word, Sacristans, Church floral decorators and cleaners, organists & choir. Those who assist in the background with secretarial work, Alter servers & supervisors. Those who serve on parish groups, committees and organizations and those who help with directing the various parish programmes.

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

Do you need financial or practical assistance or even a friendly chat?

The St. Vincent De Paul Society is here to help. You can contact us through our helpline number: 07738838187