

## MARY AND THE WORD OF GOD

(LUKE 1:26-38)



Mary is the central figure in Luke's account of the birth of Jesus. Our gospel reading today presents us with the scene of the annunciation of the birth of Jesus by the angel Gabriel, God's messenger.

However, this is not a simple announcement: Mary is not the passive instrument by whom God's purpose is achieved; rather, this depends on Mary's willingness to accept her place in God's plan. Throughout Luke's Gospel account, the evangelist emphasises the importance of God's *word*. It is this word that Mary accepts and to which she commits herself. In this way, she is the model of the disciple, one who listens to God's word, meditates upon it and puts it into practice. We hear this theme restated in different ways often in Luke's narrative.

The annunciation of a birth is a frequent event in the Bible and the last example before this one is that given to Zechariah in the Temple, about the birth of John the Baptist. Such an account indicates the importance of the child to be born and his place in the Lord's plan for Israel. But there is a crucial difference between the annunciation to Mary and all the rest. In every other case, the woman has been unable to bear a child, which to everyone else would be an indication of punishment from God, hence the shame attached to her condition. God intervenes to remove the cause of her barrenness and the child is conceived in the normal way. There is no indication that Mary suffers from any condition which would prevent her having a child – quite the reverse – but Luke's concern is to show that Jesus has no human father and is the Son of God. The virginal conception of Jesus is a far greater miracle than the birth of the heroes of Israel – and of John the Baptist. ■

### REFLECT

Advent is the season when we think of Mary's place in the story of God's dealings with the human race and of her importance in the life of the Church, the People of God. She is held up as a model for the disciples of Jesus. But even for Luke, her importance lies not so much in her being the physical mother of Jesus, but in her attitude to the word of God, listening, meditating and putting it into practice. It is in this that Mary can be our model.

We may feel that we cannot do much to advance the Kingdom of God, but as long as we try to live up to our Christian calling, then we are doing all that the Lord expects of us. Bringing up a family, living our life in the light of our faith, is what being a disciple of Jesus is all about. One thing we might keep in mind is that Mary and Joseph were real human beings, and it is clear that committing themselves to God's plan was not easy. In that, they can be truly examples that we can follow. ■

### DO

Put out the figure of Mary from your crib set; use it during the week to help you reflect on Mary and her positive response to God's word.



### LEARN

The mystery of the Incarnation is better described as 'the virginal conception of Jesus', rather than 'the virgin birth'.

Annunciation narratives in the Bible are stereotyped stories, designed to highlight the importance of the child to be born.

The annunciation to Mary is the only story of this type to include a virginal conception.

### SAY

**Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with you.**

## PARISH OF DROMORE

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Parish website: [www.stcolmans.org](http://www.stcolmans.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/stcolmans](https://www.facebook.com/stcolmans)

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### Fourth Sunday of Advent

#### Sunday Mass Times

**St Colman's Dromore**                      **All Saints, Ballela**

Sunday, 11.00 am                              Sunday, 9.45 am

Sunday Masses are broadcast live on Facebook  
([www.facebook.com/stcolmans](https://www.facebook.com/stcolmans))

#### Weekday masses

**Mon & Tues** : 9.30am (St Colmans)

**Wed: 7.00pm Service of Perfect Contrition** (St Colman's)

#### Mass times for Christmas

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> Dec – Christmas Eve**

6.00 and 9.00 pm – Dromore

7.30 pm – Ballela

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day**

9.45 am – Ballela

11.00 am – Dromore

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> December – St Stephen's Day**

10.00 am and 7.30 pm – Dromore

6.00 pm – Ballela

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> December – Feast of the Holy Family**

9.45 am – Ballela

11.00 am – Dromore

#### Ballela Anniversaries

**Sun 20:** Martha McCullough

Patrick & Sarah Burns

**Thurs 24:** Oliver & Andy McAleenan

**Sun 27:** None

#### Dromore Anniversaries

**Sun 20:** John Aherne

**Mon 21:** Ann Cappa, Alice and William Cappa

**Thurs 24:** Oliver McAleenan

**Sun 27:** None

**Offertory promise collection** €692.60

#### Recently Baptised

Fia Ella McCusker

Ruby Grace Murray

#### DROMORE DIOCESAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Journal of Seanchas Dhroim Mor 2020 is now on sale price £10 or £15 to include p&p. Please contact any of the following to purchase a copy: Fr

McMahon (028-40662136) or

[afmcmahon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:afmcmahon@hotmail.co.uk)

### 20<sup>th</sup> Dec 2020

#### Celebration of Christmas

We plan a celebration of Christmas that enables us to gather for mass while observing social distancing. The following will be put in place, restrictions permitting.

- 1) **We ask you to attend one mass only over the Christmas weekend (Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> – Sun 27<sup>th</sup>)**
- 2) We will provide **additional masses**.
- 3) **Seating** will be arranged to ensure maximum numbers in compliance with PHA regulations.
- 4) We ask you to book a place for your **household** at one of the masses by:
  - **Filling in a booking form at the church door**
  - **Phone or email the parish office giving your name, address, contact number and indicating the mass and the number of people in your group.**
- 5) **At the time of printing, the following masses are fully booked: 6.00pm & 7.30pm Christmas Eve**

#### New Lockdown after Christmas

Details for churches of the new lockdown are not yet published but it appears that churches may continue to provide public worship while maintaining social distance and safety precautions. Our Christmas masses next weekend will go ahead as planned.

#### St. Colman's P.S, Dromore

We are looking forward to welcoming applications for new P1 admissions in 2021. For further information about our school, please visit our website where you can also view our 'Virtual Open Day' video. Enrolment opens on 7<sup>th</sup> January, if you would like assistance with your application or have any questions please get in touch on Tel: 92692628 or Email:

[info@stcolmans.dromore.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stcolmans.dromore.ni.sch.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you

#### SVP alternative "Giving Tree"

This year the committee are NOT having a "Giving Tree". Instead parishioners are encouraged to donate on line. You can go to :

[www.svp.ie/dromoreconferencedownappeal](http://www.svp.ie/dromoreconferencedownappeal)