

Parish Newsletter

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT | 31 March 2019
Cycle C | Issue 18

THE PRODIGAL WAY



I remember a couple I met once who were very upset. The problem was that their adult children had told them that they wanted their inheritance now, as they felt there was no point in receiving it later. The couple had been more than generous to this point – but this was something they never saw coming.

For me, it was a perfect image of the younger son in today's Gospel – basically telling his father he was as

good as dead to him, so he might as well get the inheritance now. It's not a nice feeling as a parent. Even when it comes to debates on issues, from politics to parenting, I've heard the older generation relate that their adult child can simply treat them as 'dead' if their opinion doesn't match their own.

I have often thought that developing a sense of entitlement is a very dangerous thing. The young man in the Gospel had it, and his older brother

Today's Readings



Josiah 5:9-12
Psalm 33:2-7
2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Next Sunday's Readings



Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 125
Philippians 3:8-14
John 8:1-11

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had, if not a sense of entitlement, a sense of expectation. You could argue that entitlement, and expectation to a lesser degree, lie at the root of so many problems: one nation lording it over another, some men's sense of entitlement to women and violence against them. The whole vicious cycle of people subjugating others.

We know what happened in the Gospel: the son got his wish – the inheritance was given and duly squandered. In a gathering in Rome, in the February just gone by, the leaders of Bishops Conferences around the world were asked by Archbishop Philip Naameh of Ghana to reflect on how, as a Church, we also demanded our

inheritance and squandered the trust people had in us by keeping quiet, looking the other way, avoiding conflict. We all know the disastrous consequences, with people hurt in the deepest way possible.

We as a church can be an agent for change, not just a tale carrier like the unnamed servant who tells the older brother what has transpired. That servant probably thought 'Well, I have done nothing wrong.' But whatever about minding our own business, and not our brothers' or sisters' – we are our brother's keeper. The way to get to the truth is by puncturing the sense of entitlement or expectation and not demanding privilege. We need to recognise ourselves as we are, be open and be ready to accept the consequences. Mercy is the Lord's work – we can only prepare the way for it!

– Tom Cox

Reflection

When have you been lost and then found by God? What is your response to God?

Lesson

The father never lost faith in his prodigal son. Neither does God lose faith in us. He is always ready to give us a hand when we fall.

Prayer

Lord, let me not judge others harshly, but learn to forgive as I also seek forgiveness.

This Week (1-7 April)

- 1 Mon** St Irene; St Celso, bishop
- 2 Tue** St Francis of Paola, hermit
- 3 Wed** St Richard
- 4 Thur** St Isidore of Seville, bishop and doctor
- 5 Fri** St Vincent Ferrer, priest
- 6 Sat** St Paul Tinh, martyr
- 7 Sun** FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



The Parish of St Anthony's is part of the Diocese of Down and Connor and operates in accordance with the Diocesan Privacy Notice, copies of which are available in porch.

St. Anthony's Parish, Belfast

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Henry McCann (and Chaplain to the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald)
3 Willowfield Crescent. BT6 8HP. Tel. 028 90458158. Mobile 07740603643.

Email: h.mccann@downandconnor.org, stanthony@downandconnor.org,
henrymccann@hotmail.com, **Website:** www.saintanthony.co.uk
MASS TIMES & SERVICES (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)

Saturday Evening at 6.30pm. (English Parish Mass)

Sunday Morning (in Polish): 9.30am, 1pm & 7pm. (English Parish Mass): 11.30am

Weekdays: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday at 9.30am. Friday at 7.00pm.

Wednesday: Communion Service discontinued until further notice (Day off)

Holy Days of Obligation: Vigil Mass at 7.00pm & Morning of Feast Day 09.30am

Confessions: Before each Mass and By Arrangement.

Baptisms: Saturdays at 4pm (3 weeks notice required)



4TH SUNDAY OF LENT—YEAR C

LAETARE SUNDAY

SEEKING YOUR LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPELS

Luke 13:1-9

1. Like many a parable, this story makes its point in what seems to be an unfair way: the spendthrift son is rewarded and the elder son is hurt and angry. Jesus is telling us that both sons failed to recognise the free gift of love offered by their father. Love is a free gift, not something we earn by our goodness. When have you experienced this truth in the love you have received from others? When has the experience of human love prompted you to reflect on God's love for you?

2. After some time, the younger son 'came to himself' and returned home. Where and when have you experienced a homecoming after a time of exile and alienation? What helped you to come to yourself and make that journey home?

3. The older son resented the welcome given to the younger son after his wandering and dissolute life. This contrasts with the welcome the father gave the younger son. Perhaps you have experienced these differing attitudes in yourself when people you knew 'came to themselves'. How did you move beyond those initial feelings?

John Byrne OSA. Email jpbyrneosa@gmail.com

WE REMEMBER OUR DECEASED LOVED-ONES

Anniversaries: Theresa McCann, Patrick, Catherine & Tommy Bell & Tommy Bell Jr, Fred McGreevy, Susan Gallagher, Fr Pat Gallagher

READERS AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Sun 31st March

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Ann Flanagan

Morning Mass: Suzanne Hopkins & Kathryn Curran

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Frank Doherty

Morning Mass: Séamus Monaghan

Sun 7th April

READERS:

Vigil Mass: Ann Wright

Morning Mass: Margaret Sheppard & Eileen Dunn

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:

Vigil Mass: Sean Rafferty

Morning Mass: Louis Corcadden

COLLECTIONS: Many thanks for your contribution to last week's collections: Weekly Collection £656.61, Shrines £90.28. New Boxes of Envelopes are now available. If you would like to receive a Box (and sign a Gift Aid declaration), or if your details are changed, please contact Fr McCann ASAP.

Lenten Stations of the Cross. Every Friday after 7pm Novena Mass.

Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers). Fr John O'Donoghue will speak at all masses THIS week-end the 30/31st March on the work of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) in Africa. A collection will take place for the White Fathers. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

The White Fathers were found in Algeria in 1868 and today we are present in 24 African and Middle-Eastern countries. There are about 500 young men, mainly in Africa, preparing to become Missionaries of Africa. An important part of our work is to help them to be the Apostles in the Africa of the future. We come to your parish seeking your help that we may continue to fulfil our part of God's Mission towards all peoples.

Trocaire's Lenten Campaign, 2.5 million people may have been affected by the devastating cyclone and floods that have hit southern Africa. Trocaire is responding on the ground with life-saving support and the Lenten campaign will help not only the people in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe but thousands of others facing hardship across the developing world. www.trocaire.org

Mary's Meals. Many thanks to all who contributed and helped in their Backpack Appeal. The team were able to fill 56 packs!

Food Bank. We are again collecting toiletries and non-perishable foodstuffs as part of a Food Bank working with local parishes. If you would like to contribute, please place items in the bags provided.

Beloved Disciples. An inspiring course on 'Spirituality for the over Sixties'. Pope Francis has been reminding us all that 'older people are a treasure'. This profound and enjoyable four week course will help many to feel new value and serve with fresh confidence. Starting on Tuesday 12th March in St Matthew's Presbytery, Bryson Street, Belfast at 10.30am. All welcome.

Holy Week Ceremonies Liturgy Sheet. A sheet for volunteer readers and eucharistic ministers, and other volunteer roles can be found in the Sacristy. They include times, ministries and other roles within the liturgy. Please put your name in the time slots if you are willing to participate.

Evangelium Course on the Creed A course to deepen our understanding of the fundamentals of our faith, as explained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, will begin in St Anthony's church after Easter, on Thursdays, 7.30-9pm, starting on Thursday 9th May. If you are interested, contact Fr McCann or put name on sheet in Sacristy.

St Vincent De Paul Clare Lodge Holiday Home in Newcastle Co Down are taking bookings for day trips lunches, tea, coffee and biscuits; overnight or weekly stay overs; conference meetings, etc. Everyone welcome. SVPD does not discriminate against Colour or Creed. Open all year round. Any information required contact Regina or Tom on Telephone 028437 22849 or email clare.lodge@svpni.co.uk. Looking forward to meeting with you.

Be Like Francisco! Thursday, 4 April is the 100th anniversary of St. Francisco Marto, one of the three little shepherds of Fatima to whom Our Lady of The Rosary appeared with God's peace plan for the world. Let us encourage children to be like St. Francisco and keep "The Hidden Jesus" company in the tabernacle. Adults are encouraged to bring children to the chapel and pray to Jesus in front of the tabernacle for peace in our hearts, our families, our country and the whole world and for the intentions of the Holy Father, Pope Francis. Families are encouraged to pray the Rosary to Our Lady for peace in all families and for peace in the world and for every child, born and unborn. St. Francisco pray for us. An Teaghlach Naofa (The Holy Family). Flyers in church porch.

Rosary at the Grottos. Join thousands of people around Ireland as we go to our local Grottos to pray the Rosary each day during the month of May at 8pm (unless otherwise stated). To sign up your local Grotto simply visit www.coastalrosaryireland.ie or call/text 087 278 6552.

Down and Connor Diocesan Bi-Annual Pilgrimage To Fatima, led by The Most Reverend Bishop Noel Treanor DD, 15-22 August 2019. 7 Nights Full Board Hotel Avenida, £715 Includes Taxes and Insurance. Pilgrimage Directors Fr G McCloskey and Fr S Gilmore. For Further Details Contact Joe Catney - 028 9071 4001 or 077 7642 5631.

Northern Ireland Hospice: Step Up For The Hospice Walk 2019! Join us on Saturday 6th and Saturday 13th April for our annual Hospice Walks. For more information and to register please visit www.nihospice.org or call us on: (028) 90 777 123

Elmwood Chamber Orchestra Concert. The Elmwood Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Fr Gerard Magee (Chaplain, Queen's University Belfast), will give a concert in the Great Hall in the Lanyon Building at Queen's University on Sunday 7th April at 3pm. Music by Arensky, Wagner and Mozart. Tickets at the door: Adult £10; Student £5

50th Anniversary of The Irish Church Music Association. Founded in 1969 the ICMA is celebrating 50 years of its existence this year in St Patrick's College, Maynooth. Rejoice and Sing - Celebrating 50 Years of the Irish Church Music Association - Remembering, Celebrating and Moving Forward is the theme for this year's celebrations. Celebrations will begin with a two-day Conference beginning 1-2 July. Keynote speakers are Fr Michael Joncas and Professor Lizette Larson-Miller. Fr Michael Joncas continues as the guest director for the Summer School. Booking forms and flyers available in church porch.

Parish Safeguarding. Can you please ensure that all Children and Vulnerable Adults are accompanied at all times when entering the Sacristy / Toilet facilities. If you have any queries regarding the Safeguarding Policy please contact a member of the Parish Safeguarding Committee. Many Thanks. Fr Henry McCann PP.