

PARISH OF ARDSTRAW WEST AND CASTLEDERG

St Mary's, Dregish · St Patrick's, Castlederg · St Francis of Assisi, Drumnabey

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SUNDAY 2 MAY 2021 – FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

GOSPEL: ST JOHN 15:1-8 THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

As the weeks of the celebration of the Paschal Mystery progress, the Scriptures draw us towards discipleship in the context of the Ascension of Jesus to His Father in heaven and the sending of the Holy Spirit to dwell within God's people. Today's Gospel passage is taken from St John's account of Jesus' discourse with the apostles on the night of the Last Supper: Jesus is preparing His apostles for the day He will no longer be physically present amongst them. Jesus uses the connection of *branches to the vine* to illustrate the two-way relationship with Him: the Vine provides the life-giving bond that enables the branches, in turn, to bear fruit and serve the God of love. Baptised into the Holy Trinity, we, the branches of God's love, are given the opportunity to bear fruit. We cannot do so on our own but, with the Holy Spirit to guide us, the Scriptures to enlighten us and the Eucharist to nourish us, we can stay close to the Vine, spread the gift and joy of faith and draw others back to the Vine, thereby bearing the fruit of God's love.

MASS SCHEDULE

WEEKDAY MASSES

St Patrick's, Castlederg: Monday, 7.30pm and First Friday, 10.00am

Weekday Masses in Aghyaran: Tuesday 10.00am, Thursday 10.00am:

Masses in Aghyaran are livestreamed on www.parishofaghyaran.com:

SUNDAY MASSES

St Patrick's, Castlederg:

Vigil Mass: 6.00pm, and 11.00am on the 2nd & 4th Sunday of each month (9 & 23 May)

Attendance at the Sunday Masses is by booking only:

please ring the parish office between 11.00am and 2.00pm on Thursday or Friday (028 816 71393)

or email at any time (castledergparish@derrydiocese.org)

All Masses in Castlederg continue to be available via our parish webcam, www.castledergparish.com

St Mary's, Dregish:

9.00am

Open to the Dunteague, Glassmullagh and Lisnacreight areas on Sunday 9 May

St Francis of Assisi, Drumnabey:

12.30pm

Attendance at the Drumnabey Mass each week is now open to both areas.

Masses in Dregish and Drumnabey can be viewed via the parish webcam:

www.castledergparish.com: click the 'mobile' button

THANK YOU for your generosity in last week's collection which amounted to £1,280. Envelopes can continue to be left through the door of the Parochial House or can be brought to the church by those attending for Mass. Thank you also to those who contribute by Standing Order and online.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT Seminar in Omagh continues in the Sacred Heart Church, each Thursday evening, at 7.30pm. Please join via the parish webcam: <http://www.drumraghparish.com/webcam.html>. This week, Thursday 6 May: *The New Life* - Bishop McKeown will be the speaker.

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY – DIOCESE OF DERRY: Invitation to Respond: The Derry Diocesan Laudato Si Group has launched a consultative plan about climate change and the environment and is inviting everyone within the diocese to read, engage and respond to it. The plan identifies actions and behaviours that support rather than destroy the environment. The suggestions cover such areas as land, buildings, energy, food, travel and waste. A draft of the Environmental Strategy has been posted on <https://www.derrydiocese.org/diocese/environmental-strategy> to view or download. You are asked to: 1) read the draft Strategy document and give feedback on aspects that you feel could be supplemented/improved and 2) begin to implement any aspect(s) of it that you feel can be put into practice quickly and easily. Submission deadline is 31 May. Submit your comments, questions and suggestions to Patricia McCormack by: Email: laudatosiderry@gmail.com Telephone/text: 077 1190 0420 Facebook: Laudatosiderry

SACRAMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS – FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION for the children of St Patrick's PS, Castlederg, will take place on **Saturday 26 June at 1pm and 3pm**. The pupils will be divided into two groups by the school, so that each child will be able to invite a maximum of six people, who should all be from the same social 'bubble'.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION: The priests of the diocese received a further letter from Bishop McKeown this week advising that, after review, First Holy Communion ceremonies can proceed in the summer providing that school principals and class teachers are confident that the children are adequately prepared for the sacrament. Following a discussion with Mr McGurk, Mrs Norton and Mrs Smith this week, the First Communion ceremonies for the children of St Patrick's PS will take place on **Saturday 3 July, at 1pm and 3pm**. Again, the children will be divided into two groups by the school, so that each child will be able to invite six guests from the same social 'bubble'.

In preparation for these celebrations **the children and their parents** are invited to attend Mass in St Patrick's Church as follows:

P4 – Friday 14 May at 7.30pm
P7 – Thursday 27 May at 7.30pm

At these Masses, important information will be disseminated about the way in which we intend to celebrate safely these special days in the lives of the children and of our parish. In addition to attending this Mass, as part of the children's preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation it is expected that each family will make a special effort to attend Mass at the weekends, remembering that you need to book by email: castledergparish@derrydiocese.org. In your email you should indicate how many people will be in your group and also state clearly which Mass you would like to attend. Weekend Masses in Castlederg for the coming months are as follows:

6pm – every Saturday
11am – Sunday 9 & 23 May; 13 and 27 June

Thank you for your cooperation during these unpredictable times! Mindful that the public health situation remains unpredictable, I assure you that I will do everything possible to proceed with the arrangements as above. In spite of this, we must all be aware of the fact that the situation could change at short notice.

MAY - MONTH OF MARY

May is a month of special devotion to Our Lady. It is a tradition of our faith that we express in some way the importance of Mary, model in faith, in our homes during May. We can honour Mary in a variety of ways in our homes, for example:

- ♦ by making special effort to pray the Family Rosary each evening
- ♦ praying short Marian prayers or Aspirations, especially with children, at some stage of the day, eg: O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee
- ♦ Creating a May Altar in a sacred space in your home

The May Altar is a great way for children to become actively involved in honouring Our Lady at home. They can help with choosing the sacred space, picking flowers, creating the altar. May Altars can be created very simply, with a clean white cloth, a statue of Our Lady, Rosary beads, holy water and some flowers. Family members can place written prayer petitions in a bowl on the May Altar and to pray through the intercession of Our Lady for these intentions; again, parents are encouraged to involve their children in this practice.

NAOMH EOGHAN GAC: Lotto results: 3, 5, 17, 30 & 31. Two people with three numbers correct, Finbar McConnell and Alan Stewart. Each win £50. Next week's jackpot £3,600.

MARY'S MEALS – PRAY IN MAY

In this month of devotion to Our Lady, Mary's Meals invites us to join in their prayer campaign for their work. Mary's Meals provides chronically hungry children with a daily meal in their place of education, currently reaching more than 1.8 million children with a nutritious meal, in 19 countries, every school day. This meets their immediate need for food but also gives them hope of a brighter future. Those who are directly involved with the charity work of Mary's Meals pray in thanksgiving for each little act of love that makes this work possible and also pray for God's continued blessing on their mission so that, through His providence, it will always flourish enabling us them to reach more hungry children. Prayer resources and further information can be found at www.marysmeals.org.uk/prayinmay