

PARISH OF ARDSTRAW WEST AND CASTLEDERG

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

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SUNDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2021 – FIFTH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

GOSPEL: MARK 1:29-39 The healing ministry of Jesus

In 'Ordinary Time' of the liturgical year, the Sunday Gospels focus our attention on the public ministry of Jesus. A focal point of Jesus' ministry was the healing of the sick. The Church celebrates World Day of Prayer for the Sick each year on 11 February, which is the Feast Day of Our Lady of Lourdes (Thursday of this week). Pope Francis, in his Message for World Day of the Sick, states that a society is truly human when it cares effectively for the sick and suffering in a spirit of communal love, emphasising that we must strive to make sure "no-one will feel alone, excluded or abandoned". Prayer was, of course, central to Jesus's ministry – Scripture tells us that He sometimes prayed alone and sometimes prayed with others. As a parish community, for the most part, we are confined to praying in our own homes at this time, rather than joining together in our churches for prayer. We are, nonetheless, very much united in prayer this week, for the sick, in our *Novena*: with trust in God's will, we pray, through the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes, for the healing hand of Jesus to bring consolation to all who suffer from any form of sickness.

POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE for World Day of Prayer for the Sick can be accessed on www.catholicbishops.ie or on www.vatican.ie/messages. You are encouraged to read in in these coming days.

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekend Masses in St Patrick's, Castlederg:

Vigil 6.00pm (every Saturday)

Sunday 11.00am (2nd & 4th Sundays of the month - 14 & 28 February)

Weekday Masses:

Monday: 7.30pm, Friday: 10.00am

On Wednesday evening of this week, at 7.30pm, as part of our Novena to Our Lady of Lourdes, the Rosary and Novena Prayer will be prayed in St Patrick's, Castlederg.

You are invited to participate in our Masses (and on Wednesday at 7.30pm) on the parish webcam: www.castledergparish.com

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

Sunday Masses: Vigil 7.30pm, Sunday morning 11.00am (7 Feb & 21 Feb).

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

Our churches continue to remain open for private prayer. You are welcome to call in and to light a candle.

THANK YOU for your generosity in last week's collection which amounted to £1,672 and €50. Envelopes can continue to be left through the door of the Parochial House. Thank you also to those who contribute by Standing Order.

The envelope boxes for the new tax year (starting 6 April) are being ordered now. If there is anyone who has not previously contributed to the collection and is now in a position to start contributing or, perhaps, contributed previously to the 'loose plate' collection at Sunday Mass, but would like to start contributing by envelope, please let me know and I will include your name in the order.

CASTLEDERG NEW GRAVEYARD: The driveway up to the new graveyard had deteriorated badly over the last couple of winters. I would like to thank the parishioners who took the initiative to improve the surface. Our gratitude goes to Eugene McAleer, Michael Gallen and Eddie Friel, who carried out the work, to Nigel Gillespie who donated the gravel and to Lawrence Floyd who supplied and used the rolling equipment. Their hard work and generosity of time and spirit has made visiting our graveyard a much more pleasant experience!

ST VINCENT DE PAUL: Once again, SVP would like to thank everyone for contributing so generously to the Christmas appeal – the positive response to the envelope collection was amazing. SVP would also like to say that anyone who is in need of help or is struggling in any way, especially as a result of the pandemic, should call the helpline, on 028 71384488. Please know that all calls are in the strictest confidence. We are here to help!

SUNDAY SCRIPTURES: Next Sunday, 14 February, is the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time. The Gospel we will listen to is St Mark 1:40-45: '*Jesus, friend of outcasts*'. You can access the Readings on: www.catholicbishops.ie/readings - or in your bible!

NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF LOURDES

We continue this week in praying our Novena to Our Lady of Lourdes, which finishes on Thursday (11 February), Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and World Day of Prayer for the Sick.

On **Wednesday evening, at 7.30pm**, I will pray the Rosary and the Novena Prayer in St Patrick's Church. Please join via webcam.

Day 4 - Saturday 6 February:

For all who have a terminal illness at this time

Day 5 - Sunday 7 February:

For the elderly, especially those who, through poor health, are no longer able to care for themselves

Day 6 - Monday 8 February:

For all who struggle with addiction

Day 7 - Tuesday 9 February:

For all in the caring profession - doctors, nurses, paramedics and ambulance staff, care assistants, other support workers in our hospitals and care homes, all who care for sick family members at home

Day 8 - Wednesday 10 February: Rosary & Novena Prayer at 7.30pm:

For all who suffer from poor mental health and those who are worried about their own mental health or that of a loved one at this time

Day 9 - Thurs 11 February:

For sick children, especially those who suffer long term illnesses, their parents and all who care for them

NOVENA PRAYER

Loving Mother Mary, you declared yourself at Lourdes as the Immaculate Conception.

Help me to imitate your example of trust

and always say Yes to the will of God, especially in times of difficulty.

Through your loving intercession,

I come before you today with my prayer request.....

(Pause for silent prayer).

I ask you to bring it before your Son, Jesus, our merciful Lord and Saviour.

**In return, help me to bear witness to the message of His holy Word each day,
by the example of my life.**

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us. St Bernadette, pray for us.

ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

This is the version that we recite during each of our Masses –
you are encouraged to pray it and to teach it to children.

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

**Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.**

I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

LENT begins on Wednesday of *next* week, 17 February. I will celebrate Mass on that day but, unfortunately, we will not be able to have the distribution of Ashes this year. This is a diocesan-wide decision, taken in the interests of everyone's safety and in keeping with the current restrictions. Ash Wednesday is a day of fast and abstinence.

The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are: Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. The main focus of our almsgiving during Lent is the Trócaire Lenten Campaign. Trócaire was established in 1973 as the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Despite all the difficulties we encountered in our lives in 2020, the people of Ireland remained united in their solidarity with people facing poverty and injustice, responding generously, as always, to the Lenten Campaign. The focus of this year's Campaign is South Sudan: resources will be available in the weeks of Lent giving up to date information on the work of Trócaire and, in particular, its 2021 projects. Trócaire remains conscious of the focus that the Trócaire Box in our homes during Lent draws to the need for our support in helping to alleviate the plight of those desperately in need. So, despite the churches being closed at this time, Trócaire Boxes will be distributed to our churches in the coming days, where they can be picked up at your convenience.