

PARISH OF ARDSTRAW WEST AND CASTLEDERG

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

REV PAUL FRASER PP, 16 CASTLEFIN ROAD, CASTLEDERG, CO TYRONE, BT81 7BT

Tel: 028 816 71393 Email: castledergparish@derrydiocese.org

Website: www.castledergparish.com. Facebook: Parish of Ardstraw West & Castlederg

SUNDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2021 – SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

GOSPEL: ST MARK 9:2-10 ‘*This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.*’

On the Second Sunday of Lent each year the Gospel we hear is The Transfiguration of Jesus. The Transfiguration took place in the presence of three of His disciples - Peter, James and John. On one hand, it was a frightening and confusing event for the disciples, but this intimate spiritual experience, this glimpse of the glory of God, this moment of awe and wonder, would strengthen them in faith and give them the courage and hope they needed for the challenging and dark times ahead.

We too may sometimes experience precious, inexplicable moments of transfiguration that bring us fresh understanding of Christ’s loving presence in our lives; such moments of grace help to encourage and sustain us in faith and embrace the challenges in our lives. But, our daily task is to stay close to Jesus through prayer, through Scripture and through the Eucharist. This sacred season of Lent offers us opportunities to transform and sustain our relationship with Jesus. We ask God today for the grace to use these opportunities well.

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekend Masses in St Patrick's, Castlederg:

Vigil 6.00pm (every Saturday)

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

Weekday Masses:

Monday: 7.30pm, First Friday: 10.00am, Saturday (Lent only): 10.00am

You are invited to participate in our Masses on the parish webcam:

www.castledergparish.com

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

Sunday Masses: Vigil 7.30pm, Sunday morning 11.00am (1st & 3rd Sundays of the month - 7 & 21 March).

Weekday Masses in Aghyaran:

Tuesday: 10.00am, Wednesday (Lent only): 10.00am, Thursday: 10.00am

Our churches continue to remain open for private prayer. You are welcome to light a candle for your prayer intentions.

UPDATE ON CLOSURE / RE-OPENING OF CHURCHES:

In light of the NI Executive’s extension of the current restrictions, and on the basis of the continued and unequivocal public health message that people should continue to stay at home, the Northern Bishops have agreed that the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgies in our churches should continue, for the time being, without the physical presence of the faithful. Marriages, funerals and baptisms may continue (subject to strict safety guidelines and regulations) with arrangements being made for live-streaming, where possible. The next NI Executive review of current lockdown provisions will take place on Thursday 18 March. The Northern Bishops have agreed to further assess the situation immediately after that date, in the cautious expectation that, from Friday 26 March onwards, and in preparation for Holy Week, the faithful may safely gather once more for the celebration of Mass, with all necessary risk assessments having taken place and necessary precautions and mitigations in place. We pray that circumstances will indeed enable this to happen.

WALKING THE VIA DOLOROSA (WAY OF THE CROSS) WITH JESUS: Friday evening, at 7.30pm, live-streamed this week from St Patrick's, Castlederg. The theme of this Friday evening’s liturgy will be “*The trial before Pilate.*” Please join me on the webcam for this time of prayer. You can view or download the Participant’s Prayer Leaflet in advance, during the week, on our parish website, www.castledergparish.com

THE SUNDAY MASS MISSALETTES will be available for next weekend again (and beyond) from the church porches and from Dinny McCrory’s shop in Castlederg. The **PARTICIPANT’S PRAYER LEAFLET for the Via Dolorosa Liturgies** is published on our parish website, each week, for your convenience. This will be published early each week, to enable you to access it at a time that might suit you during the week.

THANK YOU for your generosity in last week’s collection which amounted to £820. Your ongoing financial support of the parish is very much appreciated. Envelopes can continue to be left through the door of the Parochial House.

PARISH FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2020: A Summary Income & Expenditure Account for 2020 is now displayed on the noticeboards of our three churches. You are invited to take the time to view it at your convenience, when you visit the church. If anybody has any queries on it or anything they would like clarified, please do contact me.

TRÓCAIRE: If you haven't yet picked up your Trócaire Box, there are boxes available at the porches of each church and also in Dinny's shop. It can form part of the Sacred Space in our homes this Lent, reminding us of our duty to be generous to those less fortunate than ourselves. South Sudan is the focus of this year's campaign.

KNOCK SHRINE – ONLINE LENTEN PROGRAMME: a series of online discussions on the Thursday nights of Lent, at 8.30pm. Under the title 'Living Christian Faith – Lenten Conversations', there will be a different theme each week. *Where do we find hope and joy in our lives? How can our faith build mental strength, wellbeing and resilience? How has the Covid pandemic impacted upon our faith?* These are just some of the questions that will be explored over the six weeks. Join in on ' or on Facebook @knockshine

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2021 – CASTLEDERG BRANCH: This year's local service was scheduled to take place in St Patrick's Church, Aghyaran, this Friday but, unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions, is not able to be held. You can view a pre-recorded service, prepared by Christian women of Vanuatu, on the WDP website, www.wwdp.org.uk. The theme this year is '*Build on a strong foundation*'.

BLOOD DONATION SERVICE: NI Blood Transfusion Service will be stationed at St Patrick's Hall, Castlederg, this Tuesday, 2 March, 1.00 – 4.00pm and 5.00 – 7.30pm. Donations are by appointment only. Call 08085 534 653 to book a slot.

RADIO MARIA IRELAND, based at St Anthony's Business Park, Ballymount Road, Dublin 22, is an Irish-run Catholic Talk-Radio Station with commercial-free broadcasting of Prayer, Catechesis, Music, Talks, Interviews and Testimonies. If you are not already a follower of the station, Radio Maria Ireland encourage you to join their growing faith family! You can tune in to the station in a variety of ways:

- Digital TV - Saorview Channel 210/ Freeview TV (Channel number varies per location in NI)
- Download FREE App "RADIO MARIA IRELAND"
- Streaming on website, www.radiomarie.ie (subscribe and donate here also)
- 'Listen Live Radio' link on Facebook Page. (Like, Share and Follow us on Facebook)
- Phone – get live radio feed by calling 003531 437 3277 (no extra charges apply).

Prayer and song requests welcome. "A Catholic voice in your home". Fr Eamonn McCarthy is Director.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURES: Next Sunday, 7 March, is the Third Sunday of Lent. The Gospel we will listen to is St John 2:13-25, 'The Cleansing of the Temple.' You can access the Readings in the Missalette, which is posted on our parish website, www.castledergparish.com – or in your bible!

MAKE LENT MEANINGFUL: Below are excerpts from an article by Fr Brendan McManus SJ on 'Make Lent Meaningful' in the February edition of The Sacred Heart Messenger:

"In preparing for Lent, Pope Francis quotes the prophet Amos, 'What I want is mercy not sacrifice', a shift of emphasis away from what *I do* to what *God does in me*.....Yet people may still get caught up in Lent as simply a time of self-sacrifice, a giving up of stuff through self-discipline or will-power. Nothing wrong with that but just notice the emphasis on 'self' and what 'I' am doing. It seems almost to cut God out of the picture. The better question is, 'What is God asking of me at this moment, and what is holding me back; how can I bloom and grow?' The quote from Amos is inviting us to act in a merciful or loving way which is subtly different. For example, a person may be called to go the extra mile with someone, to mend a fractured relationship, to ask forgiveness for a hurt caused, to turn away from vice and reform their life.....Obviously there is sacrifice involved here, and there is always a cost in changing for the better, but the goal is not sacrifice, it is trying to do the right thing, the loving thing.....doing what God wants, though brings its own courage, hidden strength and grace that allows us to go beyond our normal selves."

Each day of Lent everyone is encouraged to pray the Diocesan Lenten Prayer.

**Loving Father, to prepare for His mission of proclaiming Your kingdom to the world
Your Son Jesus was guided by Your Holy Spirit to the quiet of the desert.**

**In these Lenten days, I pray that I will be guided by that same Spirit,
to a place of renewal in my heart and mind,
so that I will seek opportunities for daily personal prayer,
personal sacrifices and acts of kindness.**

**With Your help, may I too be truly prepared to share in the story of the
passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Your Son, our Lord. Amen.**