

Parish of Greencastle, Co. Tyrone (Diocese of Derry)

St. Patrick's, Greencastle Our Lady of the Wayside, Broughderg

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time [Year A] (19th January, 2020)

Parochial House, 164, Greencastle Road, Sheskinshule, Omagh, BT79 7RU

Website: greencastleparish.com • Email: greencastlepp@yahoo.com • Tel: (028) 816 48474

Thought for the Week: "We are never completely ourselves unless we belong to a people. That is why no one is saved alone, as an isolated individual." *Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation 'On the Call to Holiness (section 6)*

Liturgy Schedule for the Second Week in Ordinary Time [Year A] (19th January – 26th January)

Saturday 18th January	St. Patrick's	6.00pm	Vigil Mass: Packie Glass (5 th Anniv.)
Sunday 19th January	St. Patrick's	9.00am	Mass (Missa Pro Populo)
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady of the Wayside	11.00am	Mass

Please note that there will be NO MASS between Monday 20th and Friday 24th January
Adoration followed by Rosary will continue Wednesday 22nd January from 12 noon to 7.00pm

Saturday 25th January	St. Patrick's	6.00pm	Vigil Mass: Bernard McLaughlin (3 rd Anniversary)
Conversion of St. Paul	Do This in Memory (wk 5)		
Sunday 26th January	St. Patrick's	9.00am	Mass (Missa Pro Populo)
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time	Our Lady of the Wayside	11.00am	Mass

Weekly Collection: £1,105 *Thank you for your generosity*

Remembering our Dead: We pray for the happy repose of the souls of **Packie Glass (5th)**, **Eileen Carson (8th)** and **Peter Clarke (6th)** whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes in 2020: Thursday 2nd to Tuesday 7th July.
 Applications are now being sought for the 2020 Youth Pilgrimage, from those who will be age 17 at time of travel. Forms can be requested through schools or directly from the Lourdes Pilgrimage Office, 164 Bishop Street, Derry, BT48 6UJ (email derry pilgrim@outlook.com).
Gift Vouchers for all pilgrims to the value of £25 and £50 can be ordered via these same contact details

Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (led by Bishop Donal McKeown):
 Thursday 2nd July to Tuesday 7th July. £679 (deposit £100 – non-refundable) including full board and transfers in Lourdes. The Pilgrimage Office in the Diocesan Pastoral Centre at 164 Bishop Street, Derry, BT48 6UJ will be open for enquiries and bookings each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 11.00am to 1.00pm from Tuesday 14th January. Call (028) 7126 0293 / (0044 28 7126 0293 from ROI). • email: derry pilgrim@outlook.com

Some Important Dates

Thursday 6th February at 7.30pm Service of Light for P7 Confirmation children		
Thursday 26th March at 7.30pm First Confession for P4 Children	Sunday 12th April Easter Sunday	Sunday 26th April at 2.00pm Confirmation
Saturday 6th June at 12noon First Holy Communion	Saturday 4th / Sunday 5th July Cemetery Prayers in Greencastle / Broughderg	Monday 2nd November All Souls Day Mass for Faithful Departed

Strule Arts Centre – Irish Cultural Activities (Wednesday 15th January to Wednesday 1st April):
Sean-Nós and Set Dancing 6.00pm to 7.00pm • **Singing in Irish** 7.00pm to 8.00pm
Irish Language Classes for Beginner, Improver and Advanced Levels 8.00pm to 9.30pm
Irish Conversation (Friday 17th January to Friday 3rd April) 10.30am to 12 noon
For more information and to book call (028) 8224 7831

Children in Crossfire – Advent Campaign: Thank you for all donations towards Children in Crossfire's Advent campaign. Our work cannot be done without the vital support we receive from people here in Derry.
Next weekend is the last call for any remaining donations

Next Week's Readings: Isaiah 8:23-9:3 • Psalm 26:1, 4, 13-14, R/ v1 • 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17
 Matthew 4:12-23 • Lectionary1:644 **Sunday [Year A] • Weekday [Year 1]**

6.00pm Saturday Vigil	Offertory Gift Rota	9.00am Sunday Morning
18 th January • Caoimhe Maguire	Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	19 th January • Danielle Gumley
25 th January* • Shea McCullagh	Third Sunday in Ordinary Time	26 th January • Katelyn Gumley
If you cannot attend please ensure that you have arranged with another family for the gifts to be presented *Do This In Memory Programme (Week 5) We need new volunteers in every aspect of life		

Loreto Grammar School – Open Night: Wednesday 22nd January with registration from 5.30pm and Principal's Welcome at 6.00pm. P6 / P7 girls and their parents / guardians are warmly invited to meet with our students and staff.
As parking is restricted in the school grounds visitors are requested to use adjacent public car parks

Holy Trinity College – Open Evening: The Principal and Staff invite Primary 7 (and Primary 6) pupils and their parents Thursday 23rd January at 7.00pm (everyone must be seated by 6.45pm).
Meet our pupils and staff and sample a variety of Year 8 activities

WHSCHT – Fostering Information Evenings: Tuesday 28th January in Da Vincis Hotel, Derry and Wednesday 29th January in the Fir Trees Hotel, Strabane (both from 7.00pm to 9.00pm).
Of an informal nature and questions will be answered • Light refreshments will be served • Everyone welcome

Diocesan Catechetical Centre – Training Opportunities for Young People / Adults:
 The Diocese in conjunction with Youthlink NI are offering an exciting training opportunity for young people aged 16-18 interested in Youth Work and Leadership Training. An OCN Level 1 Award in Practical Youth Work / Ministry Skills. Saturday 18th January, Sunday 2nd February and Saturday 7th March in Maghera Pastoral Centre.
 The Diocese are also offering a training course for adults interested in Parish Pastoral Ministry. A Level 2 Certificate in Youth Work Practice and it will run over 5 Saturdays and a few evenings beginning Wednesday 4th March, 6.00pm to 9.00pm in Maghera Pastoral Centre.
If interested call Yvonne Rooney, the Diocesan Pastoral Youth Leader for more details or an application form on 0044 28 7126 4087 or email yvonne.rooney@derrydiocese.org

Catholic Marriage Encounter Ireland – Marriage Enrichment Weekend: Friday 31st January at 8.00pm to Sunday 2nd February at 4.30pm in Dromantine Retreat Centre, Newry. Offers married couples of all ages in a good relationship, private time to rekindle the joy of their love.
For more info and to book visit marriageencounter.ie or call 0770 281 2321 [NI] / 00353 (87) 2162436

Greencastle Community Association – Cards: Sunday 19th January at 7.00pm in the Community Centre.

Annual Pilgrimage to Medjugorje: Tuesday 1st to Tuesday 8th September. £549 (includes half-board, tax and insurance). Call Maria on (028) 8164 8357 or Whatsapp 07768 395 038 for further details

Medjugorje Irish Centre Pilgrimages: April – October. 7 night stay and airport shuttle service from Dubrovnik or split for €266 per person sharing. Book any flight - any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service.
 Call us for more info and book the dates that suit you. 0144 345 10 • reservations@med-irishcentre.com

Catechetical Centre – Derry Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage to Medjugorje: Tuesday 28th July to Tuesday 4th August (ages 16 to 18). A unique experience for young people and an opportunity to engage with peers from around the world in a faith context. Up to 50,000 young people attend the Medjugorje Youth Festival each year. Cost is £599 and there will be a budget plan to help with this. Names and a deposit of £100 are due by Sunday 1st December.
For more info or to book email lizzie.rea@derrydiocese.org or call 00 44 2871264087

An Bruach Dearg Community Centre – Card Playing: Every Friday night at 8.00pm. *Refreshments served*

Cappagh / Badoney CCE – Upcoming Events: *For more info call Tom on (028) 816 48719*

Fundraiser	The Branch will host The Island Players, Donegal on Tuesday 11 th February, 8.00pm in St. Eugene's Hall, Newtownstewart. The Island Players will perform the hilarious two act comedy, The Island Wake. Admission £8. Proceeds in aid of Glenock Chapel Restoration Fund and Branch Music classes. <i>Call Tom on 07704 526 870 / (028) 8164 8719 for tickets or pay at the door</i>
Traditional Music Seisiún:	Saturday 18 th January from 8.30pm in The Castle Hotel, Newtownstewart. All traditional musicians, singers, storytellers and listeners welcome. Supper served. Admission free. <i>Come along and enjoy a good night of entertainment</i>

Pope Francis' Intention for January (please remember this in your personal prayers)
Promotion of World Peace: We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world

Accord Counselling Services: Ireland's leading agency supporting marriage and relationships, nationwide through its 60 Centres. Our aim is to help couples prepare for, achieve and sustain their marriage and family relationships, offer ongoing support and assist them in times of difficulty or crisis. Available to couples regardless of their faith, denomination or none. *To avail of this service call (028) 8224 2439 or email omagh@accordni.com*

Trócaire – Recruiting Volunteers: To support their fundraising, campaigning and education work in Ireland. *If you are interested in volunteering visit trocaire.org/getinvolved/volunteer or call (028) 9080 8030 for more info*

Foyle Hospice – Become a Compassionate Neighbour: Do you have 1-2 hours free once a week to support Foyle Hospice's Compassionate Communities 'Reach Out' voluntary befriending service. It might be as simple as calling in for a cup of tea and a chat, or taking someone out to do a bit of shopping. A volunteer's visit is invaluable to someone who is feeling lonely and isolated due to an illness. Full training and ongoing support with additional training opportunities are offered to all volunteers.
Call Tracy Gray, Volunteer Coordinator on 07841 101 932 or email tracy@compassionatecommunitiesnw.com

ASPIRE Employability Programme – Free CSR Card and Forklift Licence Training
 To be eligible you must be unemployed or working less than 16 hours a week.
Omagh Office: (028) 8224 6535 • **Enniskillen Office:** (028) 6632 6478 • **Facebook:** Aspire Employability Programme
The Aspire Employability Programme is part funded by the European Social Fund and Department for the Economy

Medjugorje Irish Centre Pilgrimages (April to October): 7 nights B&B and Airport Shuttle service from Dubrovnik or Split for €279 per person sharing, any flight, any time and we provide guaranteed airport shuttle service.
Call us on 01 4434510 or email reservations@med-irishcentre.com for further info and book dates that suit

MARA (Maximising Access in Rural Areas): Find out if you're missing out on benefits, services or grants by booking your FREE home visit. Referrals can be made for benefits checks, home safety visits, occupational therapy assessments as well as others. You'll also receive a FREE bag containing £25 worth of items to help keep you warm this winter.
Call Carol on (028) 8225 1559 to book

Commercial Free Catholic Talk-Radio Station for Ireland – Radio Maria Ireland (RMI):
 Prayer, catechesis, uplifting music, talks, interviews and testimonies
Listen via the app 'RADIO MARIA IRELAND' on mobile devices, streaming on radiomaria.ie or listened to on the phone via a live radio feed by calling +353 (0) 1 437 3277 (no extra charges apply) • Join our faith family!

Accord Counselling Services: Available to couples regardless of their faith or denomination.
If you would like to avail call (028) 8224 2439 or email omagh@accordni.com

Join the Derry Youth Community (DYC) Adventure: If you are between the ages of 18 and 25 and considering a Gap Year experience why not consider one with a difference? The DYC are a community of faith and service located in the heart of Derry City and serving the young people of the Diocese of Derry.
If faith is important in your life, and you are attracted to the ideal of service, you can find more information by visiting derryyouthcommunity.com or emailing dyc@derrydiocese.org

Support Foyle Hospice by hosting a Coffee / Tea Morning with friends, family, groups or work colleagues:
 All funds you raise will play a vital role in funding the essential care and support Foyle Hospice provide to people in our communities affected and living with terminal illness
For a free pack and more info call Michelle McGinn on (028) 7135 9888 or email michellemcginn@foylehospice.com

Drink Wise, Age Well: Are you over 50? Are you worried about your own or someone else's alcohol use?
For confidential information, advice and support call (028) 8283 9240

ACCORD – Relationship Counseling: A service which facilitates couples and individuals to explore, reflect upon and resolve difficulties in their marriages and relationships in a confidential, sensitive, respectful and non-judgmental setting.
An appointment can be arranged by calling the Omagh Centre on (028) 8224 2439 or emailing omagh@accordni.com

Parish Liturgy for January, 2020	St. Patrick's (6.00pm Vigil Mass)	St. Patrick's (9.00am Mass)	Our Lady of the Wayside (11.00am Mass)
Readers	Roisin Scullion	Siobhan McKenna	Martina Daly
Eucharistic Ministry	Brigid Keenan	Eugene McCullagh	Patricia Donnelly
Prayers of Intercession	Shauna McGurk	Caoimhe Warnock	Colleen Brogan
Collectors	John Bradley Colm Devlin	Eoghan Clarke Frank Keenan	Daniel McCrory Tony Donnelly
Altar Society	Margaret McCrory	Patricia Donnelly	Anne McDermott and Mary Bradley

Armchair Exercises: Continues every Monday night in the Community Centre at 7.30pm. *Suitable for all ages*

Rural Support: We could help you with financial stress by
 Providing free, confidential face-to-face support • Easing the burden of dealing with debt
 Helping you identify a way forward • Supporting you to take action
Email: info@ruralsupport.org.uk **Website:** ruralsupport.org.uk
 To speak with someone in confidence call our helpline on 0845 606 7 606

The Spiritual Benefits of Weekly Eucharistic Adoration
 It helps us to grow in holiness. Jesus is ready to lavish on us, many extra graces and blessings, when we come and spend time with Him in Adoration. It helps us to appreciate Priesthood. Remember, "No Priests, no Eucharist". It is an established fact that where Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is worshipped and adored vocations flourish. When we spend time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration each week or more often, we experience a great peace and contentment.
 "...of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the Sacraments themselves". *Pope St. John Paul II*

Eucharistic Adoration Prayer Intentions for each hour of weekly Adoration
12noon – 1.00pm Vocation to Priesthood and Religious Life
1.00pm – 2.00pm Married couples and those preparing for Marriage
2.00pm – 3.00pm Sick and the Housebound • **3.00pm – 4.00pm** Strengthening of Faith in our young people
4.00pm – 5.00pm Parish Unity • **5.00pm – 6.00pm** Protecting life and the Earth
6.00pm – 7.00pm The Holy Souls and the Bereaved

The Millennium Forum – Changing Place Facility: This is a space which provides a private area for people who require an adult changing bench, hoist and toilet. Over ¼ million people need Changing Places toilets to enable them to get out and about and enjoy the day-to-day activities many of us take for granted. The Millennium Forum Changing Place is open to all members of the public, not only people attending the theatre.
Call our Access and Inclusion Officer Lisa Heaney on (028) 7126 4455 (choose option 1) or email lisah@millenniumforum.co.uk

Kindercare Fostering NI: Could you help a child in need? Northern Ireland is currently experiencing a severe shortage of foster carers and particularly carers from the Catholic Community. We are a not-for-profit organisation which works to find safe, secure and loving homes for children and young people in need in Northern Ireland. If you are interested in finding out more:
Tel: (028) 90941690 • **Email:** gillian.devlin@kindercare.co.uk • **Website:** kindercareni.co.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous: Can't stop? There is a solution.
 Call AA on (028) 9035 1222 or email csoofaa@btinternet.com. alcoholicsanonymous.ie.

St. Vincent de Paul Helpline: For those in need of assistance please call 07738 837 992

Volunteer at White Oaks Acorn Organic Farm: If you have an interest in organic growing and have a few hours to spare, why not spend them with us? Contact us using the details below.
Address: IOSAS Centre and Celtic Prayer Garden, Lenamore Road, Derryvane, Muff, Co. Donegal
Tel: (00353) (0) 74 9384866 • **Website:** celticprayergarden.com • **Facebook:** IOSASCentre • **Twitter:** IOSASCentre

Towards Peace: A spiritual support service designed for those who have experienced sexual, physical, emotional or spiritual abuse by Catholic Church personnel in Ireland. Support is also available for family members of abuse survivors. The vision of Towards Peace is to provide a safe supportive space, where people who have been affected by abuse in a Church context can be accompanied as they seek their own experience of spiritual peace, one step at a time. Towards Peace provides spiritual support through one-to-one spiritual direction sessions, with a qualified spiritual companion. Up to 9 sessions are offered and they are free.
Website: towardspeace.ie • **Tel:** 01 505 3028 • **Email:** towardspeace@iecon.ie

Accord Counselling Services: Ireland's leading agency supporting marriage and relationships, nationwide through its 60 Centres. Our aim is to help couples prepare for, achieve and sustain their marriage and family relationships, offer ongoing support and assist them in times of difficulty or crisis. Available to couples regardless of their faith, denomination or none. *To avail of this service call (028) 8224 2439 or email omagh@accordni.com*

Epilepsy Action NI: Are you, or someone you care for, living with epilepsy or brain injury? Epilepsy Action NI and Headway work in partnership to deliver a community-based counselling service in Omagh. The Counselling service is for people over the age of 18 who are affected by epilepsy and / or brain injury or are caring for someone with epilepsy / brain injury and would like some emotional support.

Mid Ulster Agewell: Are you over 50 years old? Do you live in the Mid Ulster Council area? Would you like a free phone call in the morning to reduce the feeling of loneliness and isolation, reassurance and a listening ear and help keep you up to date with social activities in your local area? A phone call can be arranged between 8.30am and 12.30pm from Monday to Friday.
For more info call Marie Devlin on (028) 796 32170 or email marie.devlin@agewellpartnership.org

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6.00pm – 7.00pm The Holy Souls and the Bereaved

Red Cross: Can you spare 1 hour a week? Would you like to help the Red Cross care for people in your local community? We are looking for volunteers for our wheelchair service and volunteer drivers to help with deliveries and collections. No experience necessary. Full training provided and volunteer expenses reimbursed.
Call Julie White on (028) 7186 3764 / (078) 0302 4011

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String Instrument Music Lessons: Every Thursday evening in Greencastle Hall
 For kids to learn banjo, guitar and violin with qualified tutor Frank Nugent
Beginners: 6.00pm to 6.45pm • **Advanced:** 6.45pm to 7.30pm • Call Sinead on 07788 266 387 to book a place

2018	PARISH STATISTICS	2019
(16) 7 Boys • 9 Girls	Baptisms	(19) 8 Boys • 11 Girls
(14) 8 Boys • 6 Girls	First Communion	(25) 12 Boys • 13 Girls
(17) 10 Boys • 7 Girls	Confirmation	(16) 9 Boys • 7 Girls
3 within parish • 3 outside parish	Weddings	1 within parish • 6 outside parish
10	Deaths and Burials	11

Guidelines on Use of Modern Technology when Working with Children – Use of Photography and Video:
 The use of photography and video is an issue of great concern among those working with children. The Diocese recognises that every parish has their own arrangements in relation to its use in schools, youth groups and for the sacraments however the guidelines have been devised below to aid parishes and diocesan groups:

- It is always good practice to seek *written* permission from a parent or guardian before taking any photographs or video footage of children. This written permission must be sought from the parent/guardian or the person who owns the photograph before it can be displayed on promotional materials or websites. This can be incorporated in the registration form when a child joins a group (template permission Resource 10);
- Neither names nor any personal information should be displayed alongside any photographs;
- Special consideration should be given where taking photographs or video footage might be misinterpreted, or the images could be seen as provocative (e.g. beach trip or gymnastics display etc.). It is not to say, however, that with the right planning, these events cannot be recorded and enjoyed.

Photography and video recording are important methods of recording social activity and providing an historic record – illustrating and validating important moments in people's lives. This process is a powerful and personal one, and therefore we must respect the rights of all to make the choice whether or not to be photographed.
From Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, published on behalf of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee

Child Safeguarding: If you or anyone you know has a concern or wishes to report an allegation directly to the statutory authorities, please contact the PSNI / Local Health and Social Care Trust. If you are contacting the latter, ask to speak to the Duty Social Worker. Alternatively, if you have a child safeguarding concern in relation to any member of Church personnel and wish to report it to Church authorities, please contact one of the diocesan designated persons, who will in turn report your concern to the relevant statutory authorities. *See poster at entrance*

Thornhill Ministries, Derry – Holy Land Pilgrimage Retreat (applications now available):
 Thursday 24th September to Thursday 8th October.
Tel: (028) 7135 1233 • **Email:** thornhillministries@derrydiocese.org • **Website:** thornhillministries.co.uk

Deanery of Tyrone Statistics
 17 Parishes in West Tyrone and East Donegal. An estimated Catholic population of 65,670 people are currently served by 20 Derry Diocesan priests under retirement age with assistance of 3 priests in residence and a chaplain to the Polish community.
 8 parishes (47%) have a Catholic population of less than 3,000
 6 parishes (35%) have a Catholic population of 3,000-7,000 people
 3 parishes (18%) have a Catholic population of greater than 7,000 people
 The largest parish serves an estimated 11,500 Catholics
 7 parishes have 1,500 parishioners or less (7,900 combined) each with a resident priest. Is this sustainable?
 In 2008 there were 27 diocesan clergy under retirement age ministering in the Tyrone Deanery, as of 2018 that number is 20. 7 Parish Priests currently serving in the deanery will reach 75 before 2025.
 The maximum number of ordinations across the Derry Diocese by 2025 is 3.
 Age profile: 1 priest is in his 30s, 1 in 40s, 7 in 50s, 6 in 60s and 5 in 70s
 The clergy population has dropped 26% between 2008 and 2018 and by 2025 will have dropped by 52%

In the Footsteps of St. John Paul II – 10 Night Pilgrimage to Poland: Tuesday 21st April to Friday 1st May, 2020.
 Follow in the footsteps of St. John Paul II, visit the capital of Divine Mercy, venerate the messenger of Mercy, St. Faustina's relics, see the cell that imprisoned St. Maximilian Kolbe (martyr) as well as visit the largest Marian shrines and sanctuaries in Poland – daily Mass and spiritual activities. Flights from Belfast, luxury coach travel and excellent accommodation.
For more info, a detailed itinerary and price email Fr. Micheál McGavigan at michealmcgavigan@icloud.com

Family Care Adoption Services *Presently seeking to recruit adoptive families for babies and young children*
 For free info contact us **Tel:** (028) 7136 8592 / (028) 9069 1133 (Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm)
Email: anne.ohagan@familycaresociety.org • **Website:** familycaresociety.co.uk

This Week's Calendar of Feasts and Saints:

Monday 20th January – St. Fabian (pope and martyr) Pope for 14 years when martyred under Decius in 250.

St. Sebastian (martyr) May have been a soldier and was martyred in the persecution of Diocletian. He sustained many others in their trials.

Wednesday 22nd January – St. Vincent (deacon and martyr) Deacon of the church of Saragossa, Spain, martyred in 304 in Valencia after prolonged torture.

Friday 24th January – St. Francis de Sales (bishop and Doctor of the Church) [1567-1622] Bishop of Geneva, founder of the Visitation Sisters. He worked with gentleness and love to rebuild the Catholic faith after the Reformation. Patron Saint of writers, editors and journalists.

Saturday 25th January – Conversion of St. Paul An event in the life of Paul the Apostle that led him to cease persecuting early Christians and to become a follower of Jesus

Sunday 26th January – St. Timothy and St. Titus (bishops) Close to St. Paul as followers and later in their work with him. Tradition makes Timothy the first Bishop of Ephesus. And from Paul's advice to him to take some wine for his stomach's sake, he has been invoked as a Patron Saint in cases of stomach complaint. Titus was sent to organise the Church in Crete.

Pope Francis' Message for World Day of Peace 2020:

"Faced with the consequences of our hostility towards others, our lack of respect for our common home or our abusive exploitation of natural resources – seen only as a source of immediate profit, regardless of local communities, the common good and nature itself – we are in need of an ecological conversion. The recent Synod on the Pan-Amazon Region moves us to make a pressing renewed call for a peaceful relationship between communities and the land, between present and past, between experience and hope.....All this gives us deeper motivation and a new way to dwell in our common home, to accept our differences, to respect and celebrate the life that we have received and share, and to seek living conditions and models of society that favour the continued flourishing of life and the development of the common good of the entire human family."

Seeing your life through the lens of the gospel:

John Byrne OSA (jpb Byrneosa@gmail.com)

1. John is one who directs people to Jesus as the one who had a life-giving message for them. Who have been the people in your life whose example or advice pointed you in the direction of a fuller life? Who has helped you to appreciate the importance of Jesus and his message?
2. In the narrative, John recognised that Jesus had more to offer people than he himself had. John had the humility not to need to be the star of the show. Who have you known with that grounded sense of their own place?
3. John proclaims Jesus as one who takes away the sin of the world. Who have been the people who, for you, continued this mission of Jesus and led you from sin and guilt to forgiveness and freedom? For whom have you done this?
4. It was not just on the cross that Jesus gave his life as the Lamb of God. His public ministry was a constant struggle against injustice and oppression. When have you shared in this mission of Jesus? Who have been models of this for you?

The Deep End – The Lamb of God:

Jane Mellett (mellettj@gmail.com)

In today's Gospel, John the Baptist is inviting us to look at Jesus. He calls Jesus the 'lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world'. We say these words often at mass and today we are invited to meditate on them more closely. What does it mean? In Jesus' time, two lambs were sacrificed in the Temple in Jerusalem each day. It was a ritual that invoked purity. Jesus will preach a love that is radical for many, in a world that was, and still is, broken. John refers to Jesus as the lamb as he knows that if one loves in such a way, they will suffer at the hands of unjust systems and institutions.

When we look at the 'sins' of our world today – broken relationships, crisis, can we also see those who, like Jesus, 'take away' the sins of the world? Christ's love was not passive, he actively challenged systems that were oppressive and which prevented people from living life to the full. Whether it be the climate crisis or the homelessness crisis or any number of issues we face, 'look' where Jesus walks and is actively working to ease this suffering. When we hear these words at mass, let us be reminded of all those who sacrifice much to ease the sufferings of others. This is Christ, the 'lamb of God' active in our world today.

The descent into the waters of our spirit, is a journey into the presence of divinity ...
all human beings are children of God but not all live in the awareness that there is
'that of God' within them.

WL Wallace