



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

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

Presentation of the Lord [Year A] (2nd February, 2020)

World Day for Consecrated Life

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

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



Thought for the Week: "Just as you cannot understand Christ apart from the kingdom he came to bring, so too your personal mission is inseparable from the building of that kingdom." *Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation 'On Call to Holiness' (section 25)*

Liturgy Schedule for the Fourth Week in Ordinary Time [Year A] (2nd February – 9th February)			
Saturday 1st February	St. Patrick's	6.00pm	Vigil Mass: Peter Leo McCullagh (2nd Anniversary)
	St. Brigid		
Sunday 2nd February	St. Patrick's	9.00am	Mass (Missa Pro Populo)
	Presentation of Lord (Candlemas)	11.00am	Mass
Monday 3rd February	St. Patrick's	10.00am	Mass
	St. Blaise (bishop and martyr) and St. Ansgar (bishop)		
Tuesday 4th February	St. Patrick's	9.00am	Mass
Wednesday 5th February	St. Patrick's	12 noon to 7.15pm	Adoration
	St. Agatha (virgin and martyr)	7.30pm	Mass
Thursday 6th February	St. Patrick's	7.30pm	Service of Light Mass
	St. Paul Miki and Companions (martyrs)		
Friday 7th February	St. Patrick's	10.00am	Mass followed by Confessions
	St. Mel (bishop)		
Saturday 8th February	St. Patrick's	6.00pm	Vigil Mass: Mary Anne McCullagh (4th Anniversary)
Sunday 9th February	St. Patrick's	9.00am	Mass (Missa Pro Populo)
	Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time [Year A] Our Lady of Wayside	11.00am	Mass

COLLECTIONS	18th and 19th January: £1,155	25th and 26th January: £1,065
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World Day of the Sick – Lourdes Hospitalite Collection: On Tuesday 11th February we will celebrate the World Day of Prayer for the Sick on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The annual collection to support the work of the Lourdes Hospitalite who bring and look after the sick on the Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes this coming July will take place as a second collection after communion at all masses next weekend (8th and 9th February). *Please be as generous as you can*

Remembering our Dead: We pray for the happy repose of the souls of **Peter Leo McCullagh (2nd)** and **Thomas McDermott (15th)** whose anniversaries occur at this time.

Sick and Housebound: Fr. Gallagher will visit those in his care Friday 7th February at the usual times. *If you wish to have a relative included in these monthly visits please contact Fr. Gallagher*

Service of Light: In preparation for Confirmation, the children of Primary 7 of Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School will celebrate their Service of Light during mass on Thursday 6th February at 7.30pm in St. Patrick's Church. *All are welcome*

Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas): Candles will be blessed and available for purchase at all masses in the parish on Saturday 1st February and Sunday 2nd February.

Feast of St. Blaise: Throats will be blessed after 10.00am Mass on Monday 3rd February in St. Patrick's Church.

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

SMA Retreat Centre, Dromantine – Lenten Retreat Days: Saturday 14th March (led by Fr. Damian Bresnahan) and Saturday 28th March (led by Fr. John Gallagher). These Days of Reflection offer opportunities to prepare our hearts and minds to celebrate Holy Week and Easter. 9.30am to 5.00pm. Cost £25, including lunch.

To book call (028) 3082 1964 or email sma.dromantine@sma.ie

Next Week's Readings: Isaiah 58:7-10 • Psalm 111:4-9, r/ v4 • 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Matthew 5:13-16 • Lectionary 1:650 **Sunday [Year A] • Weekday [Year 1]**

6.00pm Saturday Vigil	Offertory Gift Rota	9.00am Sunday Morning
1st February • Life Rose McDermott	Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas)	2nd February • Nicole Horan
8th February • Kelly McDonald	Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time	9th February • Laurance McCrory
<i>If you cannot attend please ensure that you have arranged with another family for the gifts to be presented</i>		
We need new volunteers in every aspect of life		

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: derrypilgrim@outlook.com*

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

Owenkillew Credit Union Ltd: We recently held our 46th AGM and are pleased to report yet another very successful year. Our 1,429 members held shares totalling £3,792,134 and 260 of these members had loans totalling £1,783,149. Our 239 minor-depositors held a total of £3,610,13. The dividend paid out at year-end was 1%, and there was an interest rebate of 40% - this means that for every £100 of interest paid on a loan, £40 was paid back to the member. We run a death benefit scheme (DBI) whereby, for a small premium your nominee (beneficiary) will receive an additional £2,000 to help defray funeral expenses. This premium is normally deducted from your annual dividend / rebate, but if you have not 'earned' it the onus is on the member to pay it manually. The premium this year is £13.49, and to avail members must join before the age of 70. *Contact the office to ensure you and your family are covered*

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 derrypilgrim@outlook.com). *Gift Vouchers for all pilgrims to the value of £25 and £50 can be ordered via these same contact details*

Fermanagh & Omagh District Council – ASPIRE Employability Programme: Free Classroom Support Training for aspiring Classroom Assistants will run from Thursday 6th February. Training Includes: Sounds Write Linguistic Phonics • First Aid at Work • Foundation Food Safety • CV Development
Call ASPIRE Omagh on (028) 8224 6535

Greencastle Community Association – Cards: Sunday 2nd February at 7.00pm in the Community Centre.

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

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*

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

Cappagh / Badoney CCE – Fundraiser: The Branch will host The Island Players, Donegal Tuesday 11th 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.
Call Tom on 07704 526 870 / (028) 8164 8719 for tickets or pay at the door

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

<p>Pope Francis' Intention for February (please remember this in your personal prayers) Listen to the Migrants' Cries: We pray that the cries of our migrant brothers and sisters, victims of criminal trafficking, may be heard and considered.</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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 <i>The Aspire Employability Programme is part funded by the European Social Fund and Department for the Economy</i></p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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!</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>

<p>Parish Liturgy for February, 2020</p>	<p>St. Patrick's (6.00pm Vigil Mass)</p>	<p>St. Patrick's (9.00am Mass)</p>	<p>Our Lady of the Wayside (11.00am Mass)</p>
Readers	Nuala Glass	Mary Clarke	Brendan / Helen McKenna
Eucharistic Ministry	Kathleen Bradley	Louise Coyle	Peter Noel McAleer
Prayers of Intercession	Chloe McGurk	Meaghan Clarke	Grace Conneely
Collectors	Margaret Morris Michael McNamee	Patrick Tuohy Michael Clarke	Pat McGuigan Brendan Daly
Altar Society	Anne McAleer	Eileen McKenna	Anne Mc Dermott and Josephine Clarke
<p>Armchair Exercises: Continues every Monday night in the Community Centre at 7.30pm. <i>Suitable for all ages</i></p>			
<p>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</p>			
<p>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". <i>Pope St. John Paul II</i></p>			
<p>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</p>			
<p>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</p>			
<p>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</p>			
<p>Alcoholics Anonymous: Can't stop? There is a solution. Call AA on (028) 9035 1222 or email csoofaa@btinternet.com. alcoholicsanonymous.ie.</p>			
<p>St. Vincent de Paul Helpline: For those in need of assistance please call 07738 837 992</p>			
<p>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</p>			

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

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

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

The Spiritual Benefits of Weekly Eucharistic Adoration

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"...of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the Sacraments themselves". *Pope St. John Paul II*

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 3rd February – St. Blaise (bishop and martyr) Bishop of Sebaste, martyred in Armenia.

Patron Saint for sore throats and sick cattle. Died in 315.

St. Ansgar (bishop) A Frenchman who became Archbishop of Hamburg in the 9th century and preached the gospel in Denmark and Sweden. Apostle of Scandinavia. Patron Saint of Denmark.

Wednesday 5th February – St. Agatha (virgin and martyr) Died a martyr for the faith at Catania in Sicily in the 3rd century. Patron Saint of bell-founders.

Thursday 6th February – St. Paul Miki and Companions (martyrs) Paul Miki, a Japanese Jesuit, and his twenty-five companions were martyred in Nagasaki, Japan. They were the first Martyrs of East Asia to be canonised. They were killed simultaneously by being raised on crosses and then stabbed with spears. Their executioners were astounded upon seeing their joy at being associated to the Passion of Christ.

Friday 7th February – St. Mel (bishop) St. Mel or Moel died in 488. He is said to have been a Briton who came to Ireland with St. Patrick, his uncle, with whom he worked until he was ordained in Ardagh. He helped evangelise Ireland while supporting himself through manual labour.

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

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. It was a day that started without an expectation of anything unusual. Simeon and Anna set about making a visit to the Temple that had become part of their daily routine. Joseph and Mary were going to make the presentation of their child in the Temple, an optional but common practice of God-fearing parents. What started out as an ordinary day turned out to be a day with a meeting they would remember for a long time. Perhaps you too have had significant meetings on what you expected to be just an ordinary day?
2. Simeon acknowledged that not all would accept the light that would shine through Jesus, and this rejection would be a cause of pain to Mary. It can be a source of pain to parents, teachers, church ministers, and all who work for others when some reject values, projects, or advice which would be for their good. Perhaps a sword has pierced your soul as well. What has helped you to maintain hope in such times?
3. Even within ourselves we can be aware of division, at times being open to the light of God and at other times resisting it. Have you known the pain of that struggle? What has helped you to keep seeking the light of God?
4. The final sentence speaks of Jesus as one who grew and became strong and was filled with wisdom. What has helped you to grow in wisdom? Have you seen others grow in wisdom through the experience of life? Recall times when you had a sense of growing up in some way. What brought that about? Think also of how you have seen growth in another person.

The Deep End – Unexpected Moments: *Triona Doherty, Athlone, Co. Roscommon (trionad@gmail.com)*

It was an important day for this little family, when Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. Did they expect everything to go smoothly, or had they already had to let go of some of their dreams and plans? After all, the story of Jesus' birth had already been unusual, not to mention the shepherds turning up to visit the newborn Messiah. Still, they could not have expected two elderly people to suddenly appear in the Temple with a message about their child – that he was going to do great things but also would be rejected and cause great pain to his mother. Was it at this moment that they realised life would never be the same again?

The most important messages can come from unexpected sources. Anna and Simeon were advanced in years, wise and devout people who had lived well, and still hoped and trusted in God's plan. This encounter was unexpected for them too, taking place close to the end of their lives; but they were ready, willing and able to recognise its significance. Their call was to be among the first people to encounter the Messiah and to share the Good News. What is our call? The story of Anna and Simeon shows us the value of being open to an encounter with Jesus. Despite what we have been through, or what stage we are at in life, there are good things to come. Each of us has something unique to offer. We pray that we will recognise the unexpected opportunities to encounter God that come our way.