



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

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

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time [Year B] (12th February, 2012)

The Parochial House, 164, Greencastle Road, Sheskinshule, Omagh, BT79 7RU
Website: greencastleparish.com **Tel:** (028) 8164 8474 **Email:** greencastlepp@yahoo.com



Liturgy Schedule for the Sixth Week in Ordinary Time [Year B] (13 th February, 2012 – 19 th February, 2012)			
Saturday Evening (11th February) <i>Do This In Memory</i>	St. Patrick's	5.30pm Confessions 6:00pm Vigil Mass: Gerald Myles McCullagh (4 th Anniversary)	
Sunday 12th February Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time [Year B]	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	9.00am Mass (Missa Pro Populo) 10.30am Confessions 11.00am Mass: Rose Quinn (Month's Mind) Bridget and John Quinn (Anniversaries)	
Monday 13th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass: Cecilia Woodhall (3 rd Anniversary)	
Tuesday 14th February St. Cyril (monk) and St. Methodius (bishop) (both patrons of Europe)	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass	
Wednesday 15th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass	
Thursday 16th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass: Jim McLaughlin (4 th Anniversary)	
Friday 17th February St. Fintan (abbot) and the Seven Founders of the Order of Servites (religious)	St. Patrick's	7.30pm Confessions 8.00pm Mass: Eileen Carson (Month's Mind)	
Saturday 18th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	St. Patrick's	10.00am Mass	
Saturday Evening (18th February)	St. Patrick's	5.30pm Confessions 6:00pm Vigil Mass: Rose Meenan (6 th Anniversary)	
Sunday 19th February Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time [Year B]	St. Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	9.00am Mass (Missa Pro Populo) 10.30am Confessions 11.00am Mass	
Weekly Offerings: Thank you for your generosity to last week's collection which amounted to £830 and for your contribution of £560 for the International Eucharistic Congress, which was taken up last weekend. <i>Please support your community by using your envelope, even if you must attend Mass outside your parish.</i> <i>Envelopes received from visitors coming to Mass in Greencastle are returned to those parishes.</i> Please remember the parish when making your will. If you are a taxpayer please consider a Gift-Aid declaration, your contribution will be worth 25% more to your parish.			
Invitation to Mass: If you are a homemaker, not presently working or are retired you are invited to make time in your schedule to attend Mass daily.			
Remembering Our Dead: We pray for Gerald Myles McCullagh, Bridget and John Quinn, Celcilia Woodhall and Jim McCullagh whose anniversaries occur at this time			
Do This In Memory – Our Parish's First Holy Communion Preparation Programme: Our next gathering will be at the Vigil Mass for the Third Sunday of Lent (Saturday 10 th March).			
Friday 23rd March	St. Patrick's	6.30pm First Confession	FOR YOUR DIARY
Thursday 29th March Fifth Week of Lent	St. Patrick's	6.00pm Sacrament of Confirmation (Mgr. Bryan. McCanney)	
Sunday 20th May Feast of the Ascension	St. Patrick's	11.00am First Holy Communion	
The young people who will be Confirmed in our parish on Thursday 29th March will be invited to take a pledge to abstain from alcohol until their 18th birthday at the 6.00pm Vigil Mass on Saturday 18th February. Young people who took this pledge in the past six years are invited to return and renew the commitment they made at this Mass.			
Marriage Encounter Weekend: Friday 9 th to Saturday 11 th March at Dromantine Conference Centre, Newry. <i>Details available at marriageencounter.ie or call (00353) 1832 4429 / (00353) 1845 3517</i>			
Cultural Night: This year's cultural night will be held on Friday 16 th March, we need all singers, dancers and musicians to participate in this event. <i>For any further information contact Gemma on 07799 334 883</i>			
Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 43:18-19, 21-22, 24-25; Psalm 40:2-5, 13-14 r/v. 5; 2 Corinthians 1:18-22; Mark 2:1-12; (Lectionary I, page 752) (Sunday: Year B) (Weekday: Year 2)			
Lotto Results: G – I – Q – S – W (7 people with 3 letters, 5 drawn – £10 each) Next Jackpot: £6,850			

6.00pm Saturday Vigil	Offertory Gifts Rota	9.00am Sunday Morning
<u>Saturday 11th February</u> The family of Shona McKenna	Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time	<u>Sunday 12th February</u> The family of Laura Tuohy
<u>Saturday 18th February</u> The family of Alisha McKenna	Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time	<u>Sunday 19th February</u> The family of Louise O'Brien
<u>Saturday 25th February</u> The family of Shauna McGurk	First Sunday Of Lent	<u>Sunday 26th February</u> The family of Erin Mulholland
<u>Saturday 3rd March</u> The family of Dylan McFarland	Second Sunday Of Lent	<u>Sunday 4th March</u> The family of Leanne Morris
<u>Saturday 10th March</u> The family of Ruanai McDermott	Third Sunday Of Lent	<u>Sunday 11th March</u> The family of Corey Morris
<u>Saturday 17th March</u> The family of Joseph Hagan	Fourth Sunday Of Lent	<u>Sunday 18th March</u> The family of Clodagh McKenna
As the wider parish community we thank these young people and their families for this important task.		
International Eucharistic Congress 2012 – Final Phase of Preparation Youth Congress in Ballygawley Diocesan Congress Sunday 26 th February <i>See notice below</i> Saturday 14 th – Sunday 15 th April at Thornhill, Derry PARISH Evening of Preparation with Sr. Perpetua McNulty and Sr. Marie Wylie from Thornhill Centre, Derry Monday 5 th March in St. Patrick's Church at 7.30pm The Congress will take place at the RDS, Dublin from Sunday 10 th to Sunday 17 th June with a daily timetable of activities Tickets for the final Mass in Croke Park on Sunday 17 th June are now available. 1,600 tickets have been allocated to Derry diocese. Applications forms are available in the sacristy. IEC Online: iec2012.ie E-mail: derrydioceseiec@btinternet.com <i>Contact Fr. Seamus Kelly at Derry Diocese IEC Office, 55, St.Patrick's Street, Draperstown. BT45 7AJ</i>		
CROSSROADS ULSTER YOUTH CONGRESS 2012 WHO? All youth aged 15 – 25 from the dioceses of Armagh, Clogher, Derry , Down & Connor, Dromore, Kilmore and Raphoe WHERE? St Ciaran's College, Ballygawley, Co Tyrone WHEN? Sunday 26 th February from 10.00am to 8.00pm Crossroads is a vibrant new event for youth from all over Ulster to come together in a faith journey of prayer, music, talks, workshops and much more. This event is a step towards the Derry Diocesan Eucharistic Congress in Derry in April and then the International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in June. The Day will culminate with Celebration of the Eucharist; Chief Celebrant will be His Eminence Séan Cardinal Brady and the Bishops of the various dioceses will concelebrate. Representatives from the International Eucharistic Congress will be in attendance. No charge for the day, but a voluntary collection will be taken up during the Celebration of the Eucharist for those who can make a small donation, which will help defray costs. Please contact Dominic at the Catechetical Centre on (028) 7126 4087, or email crossroadsyouthcongress@gmail.com with 'Derry' as the email subject to request a booking form. It is hoped to provide bus transport to and from the event. You should let Dominic know at time of booking if you are interested in travelling by bus.		
THE PRIORY INSTITUTE – A Dominican Centre for Theological Studies: Do you seek a deeper understanding of God, your faith, and God's call on your life? Do you wonder about the world and your place in it, how to make sense of it all? Studying theology is a great way to grow in faith and undergo personal spiritual formation, but circumstances may prevent you from studying on a traditional campus. That's why the Irish Dominicans founded The Priory Institute, allowing you to be part of a large network of people of all ages and backgrounds who are on this journey together. Here at The Priory Institute, we offer a variety of academic and non-academic programmes, allowing you to further your theological education from the comfort of your own home. Our programmes are accredited by ITT Dublin and recognised both nationally and internationally. Please contact us for further information: You may send us an email: enquiries@prioryinstitute.com or phone us to discuss any queries that you may have: (01) 404 8124 . Our postal address is: The Priory Institute, Tallaght Village, Dublin 24 . We also invite you to visit our website: www.prioryinstitute.com We hope you can join us on this exciting journey of studying theology by distance learning.		
If you or anyone you know has a child safeguarding concern or wishes to report an allegation directly to the statutory authorities, please contact the PSNI or 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. Familiarise yourself with it by reading the noticeboard as you leave Church.		
An Bruach Dearg Community Centre – Upcoming Events		Every Friday Night Card playing at 8.30pm
Greencastle Youth Club Rota	6.30pm – 8.00pm	P6 and P7 (Michael O'Connor & Lucy Conway)
Monday 13 th February	8.00pm – 9.30pm	Years 8, 9 and 10 (Peter O'Neill & Geraldine Wilkinson)
Tuesday 14 th February	6.30pm – 8.00pm	P4 and P5 (Helen Clarke & Michelle Clarke)

Pope Benedict XVI's Intentions for February (please remember these in your personal prayer)	
General:	ACCESS TO WATER: That all peoples may have access to water and other resources needed for daily life.
Missionary:	HEALTH WORKERS: That the Lord may sustain the efforts of health workers assisting the sick and elderly in the world's poorest regions.

Strule Arts Centre, Omagh – Community Showcase: Wednesday 28th March – Saturday 31st March.

Holy Family Padre Pio Prayer Group – Monthly Meeting: Monday night 13th February in Holy Family church, Ballymagroarty, Derry starting with Mass at 7.15pm. There'll be two first class relics present. *Everyone's invited*

Enrolling Your Child at Our Lady of Lourdes PS: Forms are presently available for anyone wishing to enrol their child in Year One for September, 2012. These forms need to be completed and returned to the school as soon as possible.

Medjugorje Irish Centre Grand Prize: Every month for a year we are giving away one week's free apartment accommodation for up to 4 people. Text the word PILGRIM followed by your name and county to 60777 (53030 in Ireland) or phone us and we can enter you into the draw for free.
Contact us for details of our 2012 pilgrimages and €280 package deals
Website: med-irishcentre.com **Telephone:** (028) 8224 1888 (NI and UK) // (048) 82241888 (Ireland).

Family Care Society – Adoption: Could you make a child happy again after a difficult start in life? Family Care Society is presently seeking adoptive families who would be interested in parenting children aged under 8 and who need the love and attention of a caring and understanding family. Could this be you?
For more information contact Family Care Society on (028) 9069 1133 (Belfast) or (028) 7136 8592 (Derry) email@familycaresociety.org familycaresociety.net

Vincent's, Castle Street, Omagh: Vincent's is the only SVP shop in this district. It depends on donations from you. Our customers really appreciate your gifts, especially good quality clothing. The shop's profits are a steady source of income towards the work of SVP (St. Vincent DePaul Society). We realise there is a lot of competition from commercial and charity sources for your donations. We thank you for your ongoing support and appeal to you to continue to support SVP work in the seven SVP conferences in Omagh and district.
Please leave your donations at the shop or place them in the blue bin near St. Patrick's Church, Greencastle. Our SVP van can collect larger amounts of goods or furniture. Our shop number is (028) 8224 9839.

Charity Stock Judging Evening: Saturday 18th February at the premises of Harkin Bros Loughash. Music by Christine Mullan. (admission is £10). All proceeds in aid of Foyle Search and Rescue

Age NI – Digital Switchover Scheme: Age NI is one of the partners in the digital switchover scheme for Northern Ireland in the run up to switchover this October. We are now recruiting for volunteers to help with the home visit service, where older and vulnerable people get that little bit of extra help from volunteers. It is a Northern Ireland wide scheme.

Contemplative Outreach, Dublin – Introduction to Centering Prayer: Saturday 25th February from 10.00am to 3.00pm. The event will be led by Sr. Fionnuala Quinn OP in Clooney Hall, Clooney Terrace. There is no charge, but a voluntary contribution to cover expenses would be much appreciated. Participants are asked to bring a packed lunch, tea and coffee will be provided.
For more information please contact Janice on 07734 417 824 or email janicedoherty@hotmail.com

South West College – Open Day: Tuesday 21st February from 2.00pm to 8.00pm in the Dungannon, Enniskillen and Omagh Campuses. Come along and speak to staff and students about full-time further and higher education courses, including Training for Success courses starting September.
Everyone welcome! 0845 603 1881 swc.ac.uk

Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes: In 2012 the diocese will be going on pilgrimage to Lourdes from Sunday 1st to Friday 6th July. The cost is £599. There are early payment schemes available in the Pastoral Centre, Bishop Street, Derry; Pastoral Centre, Maghera; St Eugene's Cathedral; Thornhill Centre and Strabane. Gift vouchers are available from the Thornhill Centre ((028) 7135 1233) and The Diocesan Pastoral Centre ((028) 7136 2475). Vouchers can be used as part or full payment.
For further details contact Thornhill Centre at (028) 7135 1233 or email thornhillcentre@derrydiocese.org.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE DIARY IN 2012			
International Eucharistic Congress		Dublin	Sunday 10 th – Sunday 17 th June
Sacramental Celebrations			
Friday 23 rd March	St. Patrick's	6.30pm First Confession	
Thursday 29 th March Fifth Week of Lent	St. Patrick's	6.00pm Sacrament of Confirmation (Bishop Hegarty)	
Sunday 20 th May Feast of the Ascension	St. Patrick's	11.00am First Holy Communion	
Solemn Annual Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament			
Sunday 13 th May	St. Patrick's		
Sunday 2 nd September	Our Lady of the Wayside		
Derry Diocesan Society Masses in our Parish			
Tuesday 20 th December	Wednesday 8 th February	Friday 30 th March	
Tuesday 22 nd May	Wednesday 11 th July	Thursday 30 th August	Friday 19 th October
The weekday Masses will be celebrated at 10.00am in St. Patrick's Church unless a Requiem is needed on the date			
Public Prayers for our Deceased (Cemetery Sunday) (30 th June and 1 st July)			
Saturday 30 th June	St. Patrick's	Directly after 6.00pm Vigil Mass	
Sunday 1 st July	Our Lady of the Wayside	Directly after 11.00am Mass	
Friday 2 nd November	St. Patrick's	8.00pm Commemoration of All Souls (remembering all who died during the year)	
'Do This In Memory' liturgies for candidates preparing for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion			
Saturday 10 th March	Second Sunday in Lent	6.00pm Vigil Mass	
Friday 23 rd March		6.30pm First Confessions (Reconciliation)	
Saturday 31 st March	Palm Sunday	6.00pm Vigil Mass	
Saturday 5 th May	Fifth Sunday of Easter	6.00pm Vigil Mass	
Sunday 20 th May	Feast of the Ascension of the Lord	11.00am First Holy Communion	
Saturday 9 th June	Feast of Corpus Christi	6.00pm Vigil Mass	
Parish Liturgy for February, 2012	St. Patrick's (6.00pm Vigil Mass)	St. Patrick's (9.00am Mass)	Our Lady of the Wayside (11.00am Mass)
Readers	Aisling McDermott	Monica Coyle	Martina McBride
Prayers of the Faithful	Emma Clarke	Kevin Clarke	Volunteer needed
Eucharistic Ministry	Kathleen Bradley	Louise Coyle	Peter Noel McAleer
Collectors	Gerry McDermott Noel McElhatton	Patrick Tuohey Michael Bradley	Sean Clarke Brian Gillen
Altar Society	Rosemary, Shaun and Ciara McNally		Anne McDermott Martina McBride
Thank you for all you do in our community, anyone wishing to volunteer for these ministries must make it known			
Those who graduate through Alcoholics Anonymous are warned of, among many things, the dangers of complacency, of describing yourself as cured. The programme of AA does not promise to turn you into someone who no longer drinks, but only to help the alcoholic to resist the first drink, one day at a time. <i>John Waters (Lapsed Agnostic)</i>			
Foyle Hospice – Deal or No Deal: Would you like to Beat the Banker? This will take place on Saturday 18 th February at the Millennium Forum. Tickets are £10 in aid of Foyle Hospice. To be in with a chance to Beat the Banker get your tickets at: Foyle Hospice Fundraising Centre, Foyle Hospice Shop, Waterloo Place or Derry City Club Crawford square			
Foyle Hospice – Leap Into Action (Wednesday 29 th February): Foyle Hospice are encouraging their supporters to be creative in their fundraising efforts and come together on the 29 th February to help raise vital funds for Hospice Care Services in the North-West region. Whether it is at work, at school, at home or at the gym the Hospice would like everyone to go crazy this Leap Year and try something different. For further information please contact the Fundraising Departments at Foyle Hospice, Fundraising Centre, 61 Culmore Road, (028) 7135 9888, michellemcginn@foylehospice.com.			

Rouskey Community Notes

Tai Chi Classes Monday 6th February 7.30pm. £20 for 4 weeks.
with Sean O'Kane Need 12 people run class.

Anyone interested in any other classes should contact Bridie on
 (028) 8164 8706 or 07847 459 428 or leave a message on the phone

Volunteers urgently needed for the 50th International Eucharistic Congress 2012:

The 50th International Eucharistic Congress 2012 (IEC2012) will take place in Dublin from 10th to 17th June. Volunteers will have an integral role to play in the success of the Congress. Between two and three thousand volunteers will be needed during the week of the Congress and also to assist in preparations in the months leading up to the Congress. The Congress is now recruiting volunteers for a wide range of roles such as administration, data entry, stewards, marketing, transport, meet and greet, multimedia, pastoral preparation and much more!

If you would like to get involved please visit the IEC2012 website iec2012.ie/volunteer and fill out an online application or request an application form from the Congress office. Induction training sessions will begin **19th November in the RDS**. For more information please contact the IEC2012 offices on (01) 2349900.

50th International Eucharistic Congress: Bookings to attend the 50th International Eucharistic Congress are live at iec2012.ie. You can book for 7 days, for 3 days or for a single day. You can decide to come as an individual, as a family or as a group. Clergy bookings are live as well. Do not leave it to the last minute! Read more about the different possibilities of booking for the Congress and book now!

Teresa Menendez I Senior Marketing and Publications Officer I 50th International Eucharistic Congress 2012.
 Sandymount Building I RDS I Simonscourt Road I Dublin 4.
 T: +353 1 234 9904 (Direct) I T: + 353 1 234 9900 (Main)
 F: + 353 1 667 5050 (Fax). E: marketing@iec2012.ie I W: www.iec2012.ie

The 50th International Eucharistic Congress 2012: This will take place in Dublin from 10th to 17th June under the theme '*The Eucharist: Communion with Christ and with one another*' and expects 25,000 pilgrims to participate each day, both from Ireland and from overseas.

It is an international gathering of people, which aims to promote an awareness of the central place of the Eucharist in the life and mission of the Catholic Church; help improve our understanding and celebration of the liturgy and draw attention to the social dimension of the Eucharist.



These aims are achieved through a programme of pastoral preparation in the years leading up to the Congress and the actual week of the Congress that consists of a programme of Prayer, Eucharist, workshops, discussion groups, catechesis and testimonies, cultural events, a youth space, tours, exhibitions, a Eucharistic Procession, a massive closing ceremony in Croke Park and more.

For more information visit iec2012.ie

The pope said that the Holocaust should teach "new generations" that "only the difficult path of listening and dialogue, love and pardon" can lead to "fraternity and peace in truth."
 He expressed his prayer that the Holocaust be a warning for everyone: "May the Shoah teach especially, as much the old generations as the new ones, that only the tiring path of listening and dialogue, of love and pardon, leads peoples, cultures and religions of the world to the desired encounter of fraternity and peace in the world. May violence never again humiliate the dignity of man!"

Knock Marriage Introduction Bureau: The aim of the Bureau is to introduce people considering marriage to a suitable marriage partner. Over 800 marriages have taken place as a result of these introductions. If you are searching for a suitable partner, why not consider applying? For further information contact the Bureau at Knock, Co. Mayo. Phone 00353 94937 5960 or visit our website at www.knockmarriagebureau.com and read about the workings of the Bureau.

ACCORD Marriage Preparation Courses (St. Columba's Pastoral Centre, 48 Brook Street (028 8224 2439)):

9th and 10th March, 20th and 21st April, 11th and 12th May, and 1st and 2nd June

Couples are encouraged to complete their course six months before their wedding date

Couples Planning to Marry in 2012: Please confirm your details with Fr. Hasson as soon as possible.

Institute of Irish leadership (Pomeroy, Co. Tyrone): Enrolments for **free** 2 day course called Understanding Stress for Personal Growth-Meditation, relaxation, therapies etc. Lunch provided. Maximum 12 people. Mon/Tues 20th/21st Feb 2012 (10 00am - 3.00pm) A fee of £5 per day to cover running costs of centre. Booking in advance essential. Enrolment for Intermediate and higher Irish classes (7.00pm -8 30pm). Need min of 10 people. Ki Massage Therapy available by appointment. One day /half day Conference facilities available.

This Week's Calendar of Feasts and Saints:

Tuesday 14th February – St. Cyril (monk) [826-869] and St. Methodius (bishop) [815-885] (both Patrons of Europe) Brothers from Thessalonica in Greece. They preached the gospel in Moravia using their own translation of the Scriptures and the liturgy in the local language. These translations into Slavonic were in an alphabet, now called Cyrillic, which they devised. They are honoured as apostles of the Slavic peoples and in 1980 Pope John Paul II declared them Patrons of Europe.

Friday 17th February – St. Fintan (abbot) Born in Leinster, he received his religious formation in Terryglass, Co. Tipperary under the abbot Colum and was deeply influenced by his penitential practices and the severity of the Rule. Fintan made his own foundation in Clonenagh, Co. Laois. He died in 603.

Seven Founders of the Order of Servites (religious) In the early 13th century seven young merchants of Florence decided to help one another live more perfect Christian lives. As the result of a vision they became known as the 'Servants of Mary' and followed the Rule of St. Augustine.

Seeing your life through the lens of the gospels – Mark 1:40-45:

1. Jesus' compassion for people suffering was an outstanding characteristic of his ministry. We see the healing power of God at work through him. Recall times when the compassion of others has had a healing effect on you. Remember also when your compassion towards someone in trouble brought them hope, healing or strength.
2. 'If you choose, you can make me clean.' Our choice is a key factor in how we affect others. We cannot choose to have no impact on the people in our lives. Even a choice to do nothing has an effect. When have you been particularly aware of the importance of your choice to be a positive influence on another?
3. Lepers were forced to live away from others. The leper's cure meant that he was also readmitted to contact with the community. Perhaps you recall people who were once ostracised being brought back into family or community. Who was the Jesus person who helped this healing to take place?
4. The joy of the leper on being healed was such that he could not keep the good news to himself. Bring to mind occasions when you were so filled with good news that you could not keep it to yourself?

John Byrne OSA (john@orlagh.ie)

Questions people ask:

- A. I see dozens of Mass cards given at a funeral. Is a priest obliged to offer Mass for each card he signs? What happens if he has signed more cards than the number of Masses he can offer?
- A. Yes, a priest who accepts a Mass stipend is bound in justice to offer Mass for that intention or to transfer the offering to another priest. Here in Ireland many priests receive more offerings than they can personally cover but there are priests in many other places who do not receive offerings and they are delighted to receive the transfer of stipends. To be honest with you, I'm not too pleased with the system as every Mass is to the benefit of the entire Christian community, especially to those present at the celebration.

Fr. Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap (silvesteroflynn@gmail.com)

The Deep End – SSSSSSSssssshhhhhhh:

One of the features of the Gospel of Mark is the big SECRET, what scholars call the 'Messianic Secret'. Whenever Jesus heals people in Mark, he tells them not to tell anyone. On the odd occasion when the disciples show a little bit of understanding, he tells them not to say anything to anyone about his miracles. You would think that Jesus would want it shouted from the rooftops, never mind the torture it would be for people to try and keep something like this quiet. But Jesus is not that kind of Messiah. He doesn't want the publicity, not yet. He doesn't want people to have the wrong idea about what his MISSION involves. It is not about the glory, it is not meant to be easy, it is not without the difficult paths, the cross! It is all about service.

We can think of the leper as all those people in society that we don't want near us... they are easily identified by this question: 'who do you not want living next door to you?' Jesus reaches out to the alienated and by doing so, in today's Gospel, he himself becomes alienated.

Jane Mellett (janemellett@yahoo.com)

Welcome Change of Approach:

To describe the covering up of clerical abuse in the Church as equivalent to omertà – the code by which Mafia bosses enforce the secrecy of their own criminal actions – is to use language as strong as any employed by the Church's critics over the last 10 years. The fact that it comes from Mgr. Charles Scicluna, Promoter of Justice at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the man with responsibility for dealing with the thousands of child-abuse cases reported to the Vatican, suggests that he and his colleagues have fully grasped the extent of the evil that infected the Church over this matter. Mafia bosses are, above all, interested in self-protection; they flee from justice. The failure of the Church in the past to ensure justice for the victims of child abuse has emerged as no less of a scandal than the abuse itself, made worse when it was the result of actions by persons in authority. It was a crime in canon law to show malicious or fraudulent negligence in the exercise of one's duty, Mgr. Scicluna said, indicating that bishops could be deposed from their sees for falling down in their duty in this respect.

He was speaking in Rome at the end of an international symposium, entitled "Towards Healing and Renewal", sponsored by the Pontifical Gregorian University and attended by more than 100 bishops and 30 religious superiors. One abuse survivor who spoke called for bishops to be stripped of their posts if they failed to protect children from predatory paedophile priests. There are still notorious cases of high-level Church officials who have never faced justice for their errors of neglect.

The holding of the symposium, and the seriousness with which people such as Cardinal William Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, treated it, suggests that this department of the Vatican at least has caught up with the expectations of clergy and laity worldwide. They have at times been exasperated by the apparent inability of the official Church to grasp the enormity of the crisis. There were glimpses, nevertheless, of problems still unresolved. For instance, an American priest psychologist who has dealt with clerical child abusers said the organisational structure of the Church was skewed in favour of offenders, who were more likely to be believed by their bishops than those complaining of abuse. But there may be an even deeper problem – the "invisibility of the victim" in a system that concentrates on the sin of the perpetrator, as if that were the more urgent issue.

It was emphasised in the course of the symposium that the needs of victims should be the Church's first priority. But that is hard to square with the experience of an abuse survivor who seeks compensation in the courts, and finds the Church's lawyers hiding behind every legal nicety. A fulsome and sincere apology, such as that issued by Archbishop Bernard Longley of Birmingham after a criminal case this week, is of far more use to a victim than a legal wrangle. Overall, however, the fact of this symposium and the frankness with which it was conducted – despite the unnecessary exclusion of the press from its proceedings – represents a big step forward. It is not just victims who need healing, but the Church itself.

From the editors desk of The Tablet