

Diocese of Derry, Parish of Greencastle, Co. Tyrone

Saint Patrick's Church
Greencastle

Our Lady of the Wayside Church
Broughderg

The Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time. 15th February, 2009

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

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Liturgy Schedule for the Fifth Week in Ordinary Time. 9th January – 15th February, 2009

Monday 16 th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	Saint Patrick's	10.00am Mass
Tuesday 17 th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	Saint Patrick's	10.00am Mass
Wednesday 18 th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	Saint Patrick's	10.00am Mass: (Rose Meenan – 3 rd Anniversary)
Thursday 19 th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	Saint Patrick's	10.00am Mass
Friday 20 th February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	Saint Patrick's	8.00pm Mass (Mary Kate McAleer – Month's Mind)
Saturday 21 st February Sixth Week in Ordinary Time	Saint Patrick's	10.00am Mass
Saturday Evening	Saint Patrick's	6.00pm Vigil Mass for Sunday: (Ellen Conway – 3 rd Anniversary)
Sunday 22 nd February Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time	Saint Patrick's Our Lady of the Wayside	9:00am Mass: 'Misso Pro Populo' 11:00am Mass

Confession Schedule

Saturday 21 st February	Saint Patrick's	10.30am (after Mass) 5:30pm (before Vigil Mass)
Sunday 22 nd February	Our Lady of the Wayside	10:30am (before Mass)

Weekly Offerings: Thank you for your generosity to last week's collection which amounted to **£840** alongside an extra **£20** for the Stewardship Fund.

Remembering Our Dead: We also pray for **Rose Meenan** and **John Joseph Hollywood** whose anniversaries occur at this time.

'Do This In Memory': Our First Holy Communion parish programme will continue at the Vigil Mass in Saint Patrick's next weekend (Saturday 14th February). The next date will be the Vigil of the First Sunday of Lent (Saturday 28th February).

Cardinal Keith O'Brien: Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh will make an official visit to the Diocese on Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th February. He will present the John Paul II awards and celebrate Mass in St. Eugene's Cathedral at 10.00am on Tuesday 24th. The Cathedral Administrator extends a warm invitation to us to attend.

School Aid Romania: Helen McKenna expresses her gratitude for your support for her recent fund-raising night held in Greencastle Community Centre. Despite the horrendous weather conditions **£2,500** was gathered for Romanian orphanages, hospitals and villages.

Ards Friary – Retreat and Conference Centre: Creeslough. Co. Donegal. Tel: 00 353 74 9138909. Email: info@ardsfriary.ie. Website: www.ardsfriary.ie. Make Lent 2009 Special, join our Lenten Retreat (open to everyone) Saturday 28th February – Sunday 1st March. Fr. Owen O'Sullivan OFM Capuchin. **"Share a Faith Journey"**. Make a journey of faith by giving time to reflect, pray and prepare for Easter. Commences: 9.30am Finish: Lunch. Cost: €85.

Next Sunday's Readings: Exodus 17:3-7; Psalm 94; Romans 5:1-2, 5-8; John 4:5-42

Lotto Numbers: 5, 9, 11, 18 (1 winner with 3 numbers – £50) **Next Jackpot:** £1,500

Annual Clothing Appeal: Due to the adverse weather conditions of last weekend it has been decided to continue the clothes collection at St. Colmcille's GFC grounds, Carrickmore until Sunday 22nd February. There is a smaller container on site which will be open every day. Bags may be left here and the containers will be secured each evening. Any further enquiries call (028) 8076 0667, (028) 8224 4145 or (028) 8076 1594.

Alcoholics Anonymous: Greencastle Group invites you to a public information meeting at Owenkillew Credit Union on Thursday 26th February at 8.30pm. *You are welcome to attend.*

ENGAGED? Getting married in 2009? An Engaged Encounter Weekend is a recognised form of marriage preparation. It is a communication enrichment workshop designed for couples preparing for marriage. The weekend is non-residential and will take place in the Thornhill Centre, Derry on 21st to 22nd February. Early booking is advised. For information contact: T: (028) 7930 0340 or (028) 2763 8512. (after 4.30 pm) E: engagedencounter@marriageencounter.ie W: www.marriageencounter.ie (click on *Engaged Encounter*)

Prayer Friends for the Confirmation Class: Thank you for your support.

GREENCASCADE YOUTH CLUB – Parent Rota

Monday 23 rd February	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Orla Lucas (P4 and P5)
Monday 23 rd February	8.00pm – 9.30pm	Catriona McAleer (Years 8, 9, 10)
Tuesday 24 th February	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Lucy Conway (P6 and P7)

B.A.D.A. An Bruach Dearg Community Centre. Upcoming Events:

Sunday 15th February Usual fortnightly dance. Music by *Lakelanders*

Every Tuesday Night Dancing class from 8.30pm to 10.30pm

Every Friday Night Card playing at 8.30pm

"Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words. Keep your words positive because your words become your behaviours. Keep your behaviours positive because your behaviours become your habits. Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values. Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny."
Gandhi

Questions people ask:

Q. Why did Jesus tell the man he had cured to tell nobody about it? Surely we are called to give public witness to the works of God.

A. This is usually called 'the messianic secret'. Jesus was well aware that many people at that time expected the Messiah to be a political power inspiring the nation to freedom from Roman domination, but this was not his mission. Secondly, too much excitement about miracles would generate mass hysteria and a celebrity cult which would obscure the teaching he wished to impart: especially his mission to die on our behalf and his message to take up our crosses and follow him.

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

The Deep End – Compassion Through Anger.

There are two possible images of Jesus in today's Gospel reading (Mark 1:40-45). The obvious one is the compassionate Jesus who pities a leper (v. 41) and cures him. But then, why the 'stern warning' (v. 43)? It's not a warning to keep quiet, because that order comes after the stern warning. There's no information on what Jesus warns him about. Hence, the excuse to speculate.

The NRSV Catholic Edition has a footnote to v. 41 stating that 'other ancient authorities read anger'. That's anger instead of pity. This makes more sense in terms of the 'stern warning'. The NRSV also notes that the terms leper and leprosy can refer to several diseases. Could the leper's disease be caused by a particular lifestyle? Jesus recognising this perhaps is angry with him. Yet, he cures him. Curing a leper who through no fault of his own contracts the disease warrants compassion. But Jesus' compassion could be even greater than that because he shows compassion to someone who possibly contracted a disease through his own fault. This is an even greater challenge for us today for it clearly shows that anger and compassion are not mutually exclusive. And that giving a stern warning about risky lifestyles is not out of order.

Could those who fashioned the final form of the Gospel of Mark have opted for the softer Jesus? If they did what criteria did they use for their preference? And if they did, were they correct? Could they have had difficulty with compassion flowing through anger? It's an issue we too may have to face.

Fr. Tom Cahill SVD, Divine Word Missionaries, Donamon, Co Roscommon (tomcee@eircom.net)

FASTING: SELF RESTRAINT IN ORDER TO LEAVE SPACE FOR GOD

VATICAN CITY, 3

FEB 2009 (VIS) - This morning in the Holy See Press Office, the presentation took place of the 2009 Lenten Message of the Holy Father Benedict XVI. The theme of this year's Message is: "He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry". Participating in the press conference were Cardinal Paul Josef Cordes and Msgrs. Karel Kasteel and Giovanni Pietro Dal Toso, respectively president, secretary and under-secretary of the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum", and Josette Sheeran, executive director of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). Josette Sheeran opened her comments by explaining that "one in six people on earth" suffers hunger. "But this is not a problem of food availability. It is a problem of distribution - and of greed, discrimination, wars and other tragedies", she said. "Today, a child dies every six seconds from hunger. The question is: Is there anything that can be done to alleviate the humiliation, pain and injustice of hunger? Are there solutions that help people break the hunger trap for themselves, once and for all? The answer is overwhelmingly 'yes'. We have the tools and technology to make this happen, and we have seen it happen in many places around the world". The WFP director mentioned the examples of Darfur, "where the world has prevented - for less than fifty cents a day per person - mass starvation", and of Senegal where "the most aggressive increase in global food prices in recorded history ... left an estimated forty percent of rural households in danger of hunger and malnutrition". To contrast this, "last year the WFP bought over one billion dollars in food directly from the developing world for its programmes, helping break the cycle of poverty at its root". "The WFP's school feeding programmes increase school enrolment by twenty-eight percent for girls, and twenty-two percent for boys, serving as an effective and affordable way to provide education and nutrition, while empowering women and girls", as happens, for example, in the programme being implemented in Afghanistan. The WFP works with "charities and NGOs around the world to ensure that we tailor our programmes to local needs. Catholic charities are key partners for the WFP. For example, WFP works with local Caritas in the dioceses of nearly forty countries, in food-for-work, health and education programmes. We also work with Catholic Relief Services, where we collaborate in fifteen countries", she concluded. In his remarks Cardinal Cordes noted how "year after year the Pope's words remind us of our duty to open our hearts and hands to those in need. ... Aid - if it is not to sink to the level of an ideology or a purely mental exercise - must always be a concrete action, it must engage directly with situations of poverty". In this context, the cardinal mentioned his own recent trip to one of the poorest neighbourhoods of Manila, Philippines, and his call to bishops of that country "not simply to surrender before the poverty of mankind; as much as we can we must seek to remedy it. ... This realistic viewpoint enables us to consider the pontifical document in the broader horizon of faith and its relationship with modern lifestyles", he said. In an age characterised by a concern for wellbeing and physical health, "the Lenten Message seems to contradict social trends", said Cardinal Cordes, yet "the body can become a tyrant" and "the desire for wellbeing and pleasure can reduce freedom and become unmanageable by the human will". "Fasting aims to make a clean break in our lives. ... It transcends the earthly dimension and pursues an objective that is beyond this world", which in other religions such as Buddhism or Islam may be "entry into Nirvana or obedience towards Allah, Lord of heaven and earth. "However", he added, "fasting in these religions cannot simply be identified with Christian fasts" because for both those faiths "fasting is a struggle against the material world's power over mankind. It is influenced by a dualistic philosophy. Fasting, hence, has negative connotations: it is a way of freeing ourselves from the burden that created things have upon us. However this risks isolating man and closing him in upon himself. For Christians, on the other hand, mystical desire is never a descent into oneself, but a descent into the profundity of faith, where one meets God". Thus "fasting in this Lent has no negative connotations. How could we scorn our own flesh if the Son of God took that flesh upon Himself, becoming our brother! Depriving oneself and denying oneself are positive acts: they aim at the encounter with Christ". Finally, the president of "Cor Unum" recalled how after World War II and Vatican Council II the "Lenten actions" came into being, in which richer dioceses help the poorer with Lenten collections. Despite the fact they "do immense good and revive hope", he said, "it would be superficial if the significance of, and preparations for, Easter were limited to an appeal for funds". Hence the importance of the "spiritual aspect" of this year's Message with which the Pope "does not simply wish to add another initiative to the many humanitarian initiatives of our day". For the faithful, giving their savings "for what is good and useful, ... must have a Christian meaning. Restraining one's own self must leave space for giving to God because, in the final analysis, only He is the happiness we seek".

OP/LENTEN MESSAGE/CORDES

VIS 090203 (921)

PAPAL MESSAGE FOR LENT 2009 VATICAN CITY, 3 FEB 2009 (VIS) - Made public today was the 2009

Lenten Message of the Holy Father Benedict XVI. The text, dated 11 December 2008, has as its title a verse from the Gospel of St. Matthew: "He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry". The full English-language translation of the document is given below: "At the beginning of Lent, which constitutes an itinerary of more intense spiritual training, the Liturgy sets before us again three penitential practices that are very dear to the biblical and Christian tradition - prayer, almsgiving, fasting - to prepare us to better celebrate Easter and thus experience God's power that, as we shall hear in the Paschal Vigil, 'dispels all evil, washes guilt away, restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy, casts out hatred, brings us peace and humbles earthly pride'. For this year's Lenten Message, I wish to focus my reflections especially on the value and meaning of fasting. Indeed, Lent recalls the forty days of our Lord's fasting in the desert, which He undertook before entering into His public ministry. We read in the Gospel: 'Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry'. Like Moses, who fasted before receiving the tablets of the Law and Elijah's fast before meeting the Lord on Mount Horeb, Jesus, too, through prayer and fasting, prepared Himself for the mission that lay before Him, marked at the start by a serious battle with the tempter. "We might wonder what value and meaning there is for us Christians in depriving ourselves of something that in itself is good and useful for our bodily sustenance. The Sacred Scriptures and the entire Christian tradition teach that fasting is a great help to avoid sin and all that leads to it. For this reason, the history of salvation is replete with occasions that invite fasting. In the very first pages of Sacred Scripture, the Lord commands man to abstain from partaking of the prohibited fruit: 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die'. Commenting on the divine injunction, St. Basil observes that 'fasting was ordained in Paradise', and 'the first commandment in this sense was delivered to Adam'. He thus concludes: 'You shall not eat' is a law of fasting and abstinence'. Since all of us are weighed down by sin and its consequences, fasting is proposed to us as an instrument to restore friendship with God. Such was the case with Ezra, who, in preparation for the journey from exile back to the Promised Land, calls upon the assembled people to fast so that 'we might humble ourselves before our God'. The Almighty heard their prayer and assured them of His favour and protection. In the same way, the people of Nineveh, responding to Jonah's call to repentance, proclaimed a fast, as a sign of their sincerity, saying: 'Who knows, God may yet repent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we perish not?' In this instance, too, God saw their works and spared them.' In the New Testament, Jesus brings to light the profound motive for fasting, condemning the attitude of the Pharisees, who scrupulously observed the prescriptions of the law, but whose hearts were far from God. True fasting, as the divine Master repeats elsewhere, is rather to do the will of the Heavenly Father, who 'sees in secret, and will reward you'. He Himself sets the example, answering Satan, at the end of the forty days spent in the desert that 'man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'. The true fast is thus directed to eating the 'true food', which is to do the Father's will. If, therefore, Adam disobeyed the Lord's command 'of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat', the believer, through fasting, intends to submit himself humbly to God, trusting in His goodness and mercy. "The practice of fasting is very present in the first Christian community. The Church Fathers, too, speak of the force of fasting to bridle sin, especially the lusts of the 'old Adam', and open in the heart of the believer a path to God. Moreover, fasting is a practice that is encountered frequently and recommended by the saints of every age. St. Peter Chrysologus writes: 'Fasting is the soul of prayer, mercy is the lifeblood of fasting. So if you pray, fast; if you fast, show mercy; if you want your petition to be heard, hear the petition of others. If you do not close your ear to others, you open God's ear to yourself. "In our own day, fasting seems to have lost something of its spiritual meaning, and has taken on, in a culture characterised by the search for material well-being, a therapeutic value for the care of one's body. Fasting certainly bring benefits to physical wellbeing, but for believers, it is, in the first place, a 'therapy' to heal all that prevents them from conformity to the will of God. In the Apostolic Constitution 'Paenitemini' of 1966, Servant of God Paul VI saw the need to present fasting within the call of every Christian to 'no longer live for himself, but for Him who loves him and gave Himself for him ... he will also have to live for his brethren'. Lent could be a propitious time to present again the norms contained in the Apostolic Constitution, so that the authentic and perennial significance of this long held practice may be rediscovered, and thus assist us to mortify our egoism and open our heart to love of God and neighbour, the first and greatest Commandment of the new Law and compendium of the entire Gospel. "The faithful practice of fasting contributes, moreover, to

conferring unity to the whole person, body and soul, helping to avoid sin and grow in intimacy with the Lord. St. Augustine, who knew all too well his own negative impulses, defining them as 'twisted and tangled knottiness', writes: 'I will certainly impose privation, but it is so that he will forgive me, to be pleasing in his eyes, that I may enjoy his delightfulness'. Denying material food, which nourishes our body, nurtures an interior disposition to listen to Christ and be fed by His saving word. Through fasting and praying, we allow Him to come and satisfy the deepest hunger that we experience in the depths of our being: the hunger and thirst for God. "At the same time, fasting is an aid to open our eyes to the situation in which so many of our brothers and sisters live. In his First Letter, St. John admonishes: 'If anyone has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need, yet shuts up his bowels of compassion from him - how does the love of God abide in him?' Voluntary fasting enables us to grow in the spirit of the Good Samaritan, who bends low and goes to the help of his suffering brother. By freely embracing an act of self-denial for the sake of another, we make a statement that our brother or sister in need is not a stranger. It is precisely to keep alive this welcoming and attentive attitude towards our brothers and sisters that I encourage the parishes and every other community to intensify in Lent the custom of private and communal fasts, joined to the reading of the Word of God, prayer and almsgiving. From the beginning, this has been the hallmark of the Christian community, in which special collections were taken up, the faithful being invited to give to the poor what had been set aside from their fast. This practice needs to be rediscovered and encouraged again in our day, especially during the liturgical season of Lent. "From what I have said thus far, it seems abundantly clear that fasting represents an important ascetic practice, a spiritual arm to do battle against every possible disordered attachment to ourselves. Freely chosen detachment from the pleasure of food and other material goods helps the disciple of Christ to control the appetites of nature, weakened by original sin, whose negative effects impact the entire human person. Quite opportunely, an ancient hymn of the Lenten liturgy exhorts: 'Utamur ergo parcius, / verbis cibis et potibus, / somno, iocis et arctius / perstemus in custodia' - Let us use sparingly words, food and drink, sleep and amusements. May we be more alert in the custody of our senses. "Dear brothers and sisters, it is good to see how the ultimate goal of fasting is to help each one of us, as Servant of God Pope John Paul II wrote, to make the complete gift of self to God. May every family and Christian community use well this time of Lent, therefore, in order to cast aside all that distracts the spirit and grow in whatever nourishes the soul, moving it to love of God and neighbour. I am thinking especially of a greater commitment to prayer, 'lectio divina', recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and active participation in the Eucharist, especially the Holy Sunday Mass. With this interior disposition, let us enter the penitential spirit of Lent. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, 'Causa nostrae laetitiae', accompany and support us in the effort to free our heart from slavery to sin, making it evermore a 'living tabernacle of God.' With these wishes, while assuring every believer and ecclesial community of my prayer for a fruitful Lenten journey, I cordially impart to all of you my Apostolic Blessing".

MESS/LENT 2009/

VIS 090203 (1650)

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. The leper was not just cured from a physical disease, 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?

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