

A short reflection on today's Gospel Mark1:29-39

Today's beautiful Gospel is a treasury of profound spiritual truths for us. Jesus goes to the house of Simon and Andrew. It is the Sabbath, the day of rest, but with Jesus compassion always comes first, and so without any hesitation he reaches out to Simon's mother-in-law and heals her of her fever. The woman's response to her cure is both physical and spiritual: she immediately begins to serve those present. The message is clear: spiritual health is indicated by a willingness to serve others. Spiritual sickness is indicated by concern only with oneself.

People who were sick either in mind or in body were marginalized during the time of Jesus: they were shunned, avoided, treated as sinners whose illnesses were both punitive and deserved. Jesus turned this attitude towards the sick on its head. He reached out to the marginalized with his healing touch, always responding to and serving the needs of others: the sick, the possessed, the horribly diseased who were loathed and shunned by others.

Jesus goes to a lonely place to pray. Jesus, the Son of God, invariably goes alone to pray to his Father before he has a decision to make. And he is soon confronted by two choices: whether to respond to the pressure from the people to stay in Capernaum where he is lauded daily as a miracle-worker, or to seek out pastures new in which to spread the Good News of repentance and salvation. He chooses to leave the comfort of acceptance and praise and face into the unknown, a decision undoubtedly influenced by his time alone in prayer with God, his Father.

Jesus, may our actions towards others be directed by compassion always. May we learn to define our spiritual health in terms of our willingness to serve others; and may we go aside to pray to God our Father for guidance in the choices we face daily.

National Year of Prayer for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood - St Paul tells us in our second reading this weekend that he made himself "all things to all" so that he could "save some at any cost...for the sake of the gospel." We pray for those being called today to preach the gospel to the people of our diocese in the years ahead, that they will know the joy that comes from spreading the Good News.

Anyone interested in serving the Church as a priest of the diocese of Derry and/or attending a Vocations retreat weekend in Larne from 8-10 March 2024 is asked to contact the diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Pat O'Hagan, at pgoh2111@gmail.com or at (028) 7938 6259.

The Matt Talbot Mass will be celebrated in here St Eugene's Cathedral on Monday, 5th February at 7.30 pm. The Matt Talbot Prayer Society was created to pray for people who are suffering from any form of addiction, to pray for those recovering from addiction, and to pray for all those affected by addiction, especially family members. To join the Matt Talbot Prayer Society, you are invited to enrol the name of the person to be prayed for and the addiction we are praying that they will be freed from. Those enrolled will be prayed for specifically every day by members of the Matt Talbot Prayer Society. Mass will also be offered for those enrolled on the first Monday of every month here in St Eugene's Cathedral at 7.30 pm. To enrol someone in the Matt Talbot Prayer Society please email vita@matttalbotprayersociety.com or private message St Eugene's Cathedral Facebook page or phone St Eugene's Cathedral at 028 71262894/71365712.

Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of:

**Emmanuel Begley
Daniel McCafferty
Laurence Hargan
William McMenamin
Patrick Burke**
May they rest in peace

Anniversaries

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

**Nora McCafferty
Danny Griffin
Marietta McGrellis
Sarah Brady
Bernadette & Arthur Wilson
Danny Gillespie
Laura McLaughlin
Joe McCauley
Neil McCauley
Patrick Gallacher
Mary Ellen Kelly**
May they rest in peace

Baptisms

We welcome as members of God's family:

**Bonnie Theresa Adams
Mya Rose Feeny**

To book a Baptism contact the Parish Office 02871 262894

Please remember: Godparents (1 male and 1 female over the age of 16)

Collection

Last week's collection: £5,807

Parish Development: £1,022

Thank you for your generosity

Thank you

Fr Farren acknowledges with thanks the following donations for:

Hungry Children: £5

Medical Missions of Mary: £10

Cathedral Funds: £50, £20, £30

Children's Hospice: £50

Sight Savers: £25

Sick Visitation

Fr Paul Farren will attend the sick and housebound in his care during the coming week:

Monday (pm): Lisfannon Park, Glenfada Park, William Street, Creggan Street, Fahan Street, Chamberlain Street, Westland Street, Cable Street, Lower Road

Tuesday (pm): Mulvey Park, Beechwood Street, Elmwood Terrace, Gartan Square, Clarendon Manor

Readers for 10th/11th February

06.15 pm Claire O'Kane

07.30 pm Caolán Orr/
Caitlin Horner McLaughlin

09.30 am Barry McDaid

11.00 am McGinley Readers

12.30 pm Sean Hickey

07.00 pm Marian Boyle

The Cathedral Club will meet after the 10.00am Mass each Thursday in the Cathedral Hall. Everyone is welcome to this parish social group. Refreshments will be served.

Walk with Me – A journey of Prayer Lenten Booklets is available to buy from the Parish Office. Price £1.

The Sacrament of Confirmation – This year 160 children from our four primary schools in the parish will receive the sacrament of Confirmation: St Eugene’s PS and Model PS on Thursday 8th February and Rosemount PS and St Anne’s PS on Friday 9th February. This is a very important sacrament in their lives, and it is also a very special day in the life of the parish. We pray for the children at this time. *May the Holy Spirit help them to grow in faith, hope and love and may they come to know the one true God who loves them without limit.*

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Fifth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
4th February 2024*

Priests: Fr Paul Farren, Fr Shaun Doherty

Sign up Sunday: At next weekend’s Masses we will be asking those who are interested to put forward their names to be a part of various volunteer roles within the parish. This is a great way to get involved in the parish community, meet new people and strengthen your relationship with Jesus.

The Lourdes Hospitalité collection, which helps those who wish to go to Lourdes and require care and assistance, will be taken up as the second collection at weekend Masses on the 10th/11th of February 2024. We thank you for your generosity in the past and ask for your continued prayers and support as the pilgrimage goes forward once again in the wake of the Covid pandemic.

Lent: Season of Well-Being weekend Retreat at Ards Friary, 23rd to 25th February, led by Philip McParland. This weekend will present Lent as a suitable time to practice the things that are good for our physical, mental and spiritual health. To book contact Ards Friary at by telephone 074 91 38909 or email: info@ardsfriary.ie

Derry Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage to Medjugorje: We are inviting young people aged 16 + to join us on pilgrimage to Medjugorje for 9 nights from 30th July to 8th August. This will be 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 £800 and there will be a budget plan to help with this. Names and deposit of £100 are required as soon as possible to secure a place. For more information or to book in please contact lizzie.rea@derrydiocese.org 00 44 2871264087.

The Holy Family Padre Pio Prayer Group will meet on Tuesday 6th February at Holy Family Chapel, Ballymagroarty, Derry. Starting with the holy rosary at 6.45pm followed by Mass at 7.15pm and novena to St Pio directly afterwards. There will be an opportunity after Mass to be blessed with a first-class relic of St. Pio.

St Eugene’s Cathedral is monitored by CCTV cameras and by two live streaming cameras. Live streaming can be viewed online at www.churchservices.tv, www.watchmenmedia or the parish website. The Diocese of Derry Privacy Notice is displayed on the parish website and Cathedral notice board, or you may obtain a copy from the Parish Office.

Safeguarding Notice: If you have any concerns regarding the Safeguarding of children or adults in need of protection within the Church please contact Marie Gormley, the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP) at 07596500793 or at mariegormley@derrydiocese.org or contact the Safeguarding Office, Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop Street, Derry, BT48 6UJ or PSNI (Police Service of Northern) 101 or Social Services: Gateway Services, Western HSC Trust, 71314090 and ask for the Duty Social Worker.