

A short reflection on today's Gospel Mark 1:40-45

Today's Gospel offers us profound knowledge of God's nature and ways. It offers us this knowledge through the actions of Jesus, His beloved son. Today's Gospel reminds us that, alarmingly often, man's laws and ways, while they may often masquerade as having been ordained by God, are sourced instead in human fear, prejudice, bigotry, pitilessness, even. Jesus' actions in today's Gospel are a refutation of this: his actions demonstrate, courage, truth, and, above all, compassion - which has been described as the world's richest source of spiritual energy. In the actions of Jesus, in the qualities he exhibits, the nature of God is revealed, and, through Jesus, our journey towards God is illuminated with the glory of His ways.

Lepers, in the time of Jesus, were hated and feared. They were cast out from society, forced to live apart from others, risking death if they dared to contravene the law. They were regarded as sinners and, as such, deserved their fate it was believed. They were the untouchables, the provokers of disgust and horror. And now the leper, whose faith encouraged him to risk all, broke the law, threw himself at the feet of Jesus and begged to be cured. And 'Jesus reached out and touched him'. Before he cured him, Jesus touched him. He touched the untouchable. And there, in that touch, is revealed the nature of God. No repugnance, no rejection. Only pity as the seed of compassion. Only a reaching out with a healing touch. Only restoration and a return to innocence.

Who are we afraid to touch?

Ash Wednesday 14th February – A Day of Fast and Abstinence

Masses at 8.00am, 10.00am, 1.00pm and 7.30pm. Ashes will be distributed at all Masses.

Forty Hours Adoration – The Forty Hours Adoration begins next Sunday (18th February) after the 12.30pm Mass. Donations of flowers for the Altar would be much appreciated and can be left in the Sacristy next Thursday and Friday.

St Eugene's Cathedral – Lenten Programme

Morning Prayer of the Church at 7.45am Monday to Friday

Lunch-time Mass 1.00pm each weekday (Monday to Friday) beginning on Ash Wednesday

There will be a Lenten Holy Hour of prayer, adoration, reflection and music led by Fr Shaun on Thursday 15th February at 8.00pm and every Thursday during Lent.

Live life to the full: A series of evenings of reflection on the sacraments will run each Tuesday evening at 8.00pm in Lent. We will consider how the sacraments help us to live life to the full. During each session, we will reflect on a brief scripture passage linked with the relevant sacrament, together with a short video. There will be an opportunity for discussion/comment on the key message of the week, followed by a closing prayer.

Tuesday 20th February **Baptism: "an explosion of love"**

Tuesday 27th February **Reconciliation: "the whisper of God"**

Tuesday 5th March **Eucharist: "His body and His Life"**

Tuesday 12th March **Confirmation: "the Holy Spirit bursts through in our lives"**

Tuesday 19th March **Understanding the Easter Vigil 'the mother of all Vigils'**

On this holy night, the Church keeps watch, celebrating the resurrection of Christ in the sacraments and awaiting his return in glory.

Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of:

**Maureen McLaughlin
Catherine Campbell
John Joseph McLaughlin**

May they rest in peace

Anniversaries

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

**Denis Crumlish
Derrick Tucker
Margaret Boyce
Jenny Moran
Kitty Doherty**

May they rest in peace

Baptisms

We welcome as members of God's family:

**Angela Bridget Crumlish
Adrian Roan Doherty**

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: £5,068

Parish Development: £932

Thank you for your generosity

Thank you

Fr Farren acknowledges with thanks the following donations for:

Cathedral Funds: £5, £10, £10, £200

Trócaire: £30, £100

SVdP: £25

Mary's Meals: £25, £20, £100

Children's Hospice: £20

Hungry Children: £5, £30

Sight Savers: £10, £30

Missions: £20

St Joseph's Young Priests: £20

Smile Train: £100

Readers for 17th /18th February

06.15 pm Helen Sweeney

07.30 pm Majella Coyle/
Caitlin Horner McLaughlin

09.30 am Rosemary Finan

11.00 am Piaras O Meallain

12.30 pm Kevin Finan

07.00 pm Anna Begley

Sign up Sunday: At this weekend's Masses we are 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.

Walk with Me – A journey of Prayer Lenten Booklets are available to buy after Masses this weekend. Price £1.

We congratulate and pray for the children from St Anne's Primary School, St Eugene's Primary School, Model Primary School, and Rosemount Primary School who received the Sacrament of Confirmation during the past week at St Eugene's Cathedral. **Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9**

National Year of Prayer for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood - We pray for those discerning a vocation to the priesthood, especially those from our own diocese, that, like St Paul, modelling themselves on Jesus, they will "do everything for the glory of God... helpful to everyone" and working to save souls.

There will be a Vocations Retreat in Larne on the weekend of 8th -10th March for men aged 18+ who are interested in the diocesan priesthood. Anyone interested is asked to contact Fr Pat O'Hagan at pgoh2111@gmail.com or at (028) 79386259.

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.

Trócaire Lenten Appeal – Trócaire boxes are available for collection at the back of the Cathedral.

ACCORD Derry Marriage Preparation Courses. Following dates are available April 19th & 20th , May 17th & 18th and June 14th & 15th . Please note that all courses are now in person and not virtual. Courses can be booked online at www.accordni.com

Living Disciples – Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, Derry - Healing Nights every First Friday in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh, from 7.00pm – 10.00pm. All are welcome.

Effatha Revival - We want to build upon the Eucharistic procession in the City of Derry on February 3rd. We need your help to cover all 960 hours of the 40 days from February 8th-March 19th. Sign up at effatha.live for one hour of adoration, at any time in your local church during the 40 days. For further details email effatharevival@gmail.com.

Lent: Season of Well-Being weekend Retreat at Ards Friary, 23rd to 25th February, led by Philip McParland. 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.

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.watchmcnmedia 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.

Priests: Fr Paul Farren, Fr Shaun Doherty