

A short reflection on today's Gospel Luke 2:22-40

Today's Gospel witnesses the rewards of a steadfast faith, and lives lived in willing service to God. It tells the story of the upright Simeon and Anna who patiently await the birth of the promised child who would be the 'light to enlighten the pagans, and the glory of God's people Israel.'

Now Simeon had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. He had been prompted by that same Holy Spirit to come to the Temple that day, and when he laid eyes on the child, Jesus, who was being presented by his parents in accordance with Jewish law, he took him into his arms, blessed God and exclaimed: 'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised, because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see.'

The waiting was over. The Son of God was in the world, never to leave. Simeon can rest in peace and Anna can proclaim the Good News to all who listen. God's infinite love for us has borne beautiful fruit in the shape of a tiny vulnerable child, a child who will one day willingly sacrifice his life for our salvation.

Jesus, may we always be aware of your presence in our lives, within us and around us, closer to us than our own breath, loving us and willing us never to despair, never to lose faith, willing us to be as steadfast and as upright in our lives as the good Simeon and Anna of today's Gospel.

Prayer for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood – We pray for an increase in vocations to the diocesan priesthood - that those called to serve as priests of the diocese of Derry will, like Jesus, be "compassionate and trustworthy" ministers of God's love, forgiveness, and mercy.

The monthly Matt Talbot, Freedom from addiction Mass takes place on Monday 3rd February at 7:30pm in St Eugene's Cathedral. 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. 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.

Monday 3rd February is the Feast of St Blaise. Throats will be blessed at all Masses.

St. Eugene's Cathedral Pilgrimage to Fatima – 19th – 24th October 2025. Cost £795 per person sharing with a single room supplement of £155 (subject to availability). For more information, please contact Anne Marie Hickey on amhickey@derrydiocese.org or phone Parish Office on 028 71262894.

On Thursday 6th and Friday 7th February, the children from the four primary schools in the parish will receive the sacrament of Confirmation. This is a very important sacrament in their lives and it also a very special time in the life of the parish. We remember the children in our prayers. *Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.*

Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of:

*Mary Power
Angela Hamilton
Billy Clarke*

May they rest in peace

Anniversaries

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

*Jenny Moron
Kitty Doherty
Nora McCafferty
Danny Griffin
Marietta McGrellis
Catherine Campbell
Danny Gillespie
Tommy & Bella Molloy
Sarah Brady
Bernadette & Arthur Wilson
Joe McCauley*

May they rest in peace

Baptisms

We welcome as a member of God's family:

Elizabeth Rose McIlroy

To book a Baptism contact the Parish Office 02871 262894

Collection

Last week's collection: £ 6,343
Parish Development: £ 990

Thank you

Fr Farren acknowledges with thanks the following donations for:

Cathedral Funds: £500, £10, £100
Children in Crossfire: £100
Smile Train: £200, £25
Mary's Meals: £200, £25
SVdP: £100, £20, £30
Missions: £550
Save the Children: £20

Readers 8th/9th February

06.15 pm Mary Morrison
07.30 pm Liz McMonagle
09.30 am Kate Doherty
11.00 am McGinley Readers
12.30 pm Sophia Mason
07.00 pm Marian Boyle

St Joseph's Young Priests Society will meet on Wednesday 5th February after 10am Mass in the Mother Teresa Chapel. New members welcome to this prayer group who meet once a month.

Mass for the Intentions of the Seven Sister Apostolate will be celebrated on Friday 14th February 2025 in St Eugene's Cathedral at 7.30 pm. All members in this ministry are invited to attend. We ask for God's blessing as we commit to another year of prayer for our Bishop and priests. New members are welcome.

Please join us in congratulating Eugenia Hardy, who celebrates her Golden Jubilee as a Pioneer this weekend. We are grateful for her steadfast witness to the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association of the Sacred Heart. May she continue to be blessed with good health, happiness and the strength to inspire others for many more years to come.

The Padre Pio Prayer Group, Holy Family Church, Ballymagroarty will meet on Tuesday 4th February 2025. Starting with Rosary at 6.45pm followed by Mass at 7.15pm. There will be the opportunity to be blessed with a first-class relic of St Pio during closing prayers. Everyone welcome.

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Accord is now seeking marriage preparation facilitators. Might this be you? Catholic Marriage Care Service CLG is currently recruiting volunteers to train as marriage preparation programme facilitators. Successful applicants will receive professional training in the Accord marriage preparation programme and be part of a team delivering programmes locally. Contact Aisling on 00353 (0)15053112 or by email to marriagepreparation@accord.ie and for further information see www.accord.ie

Priests: Fr Paul Farren, Fr Shaun Doherty

Derry Diocese Pilgrimage to Lourdes Monday 30th June -Friday 4th July. Fare £849 (+ £144 Single Supplement). We are delighted to announce that The Lourdes Pilgrimage Office will be opening on Saturday 1st February from 11am to 1pm in The Pastoral Centre 164 Bishop Street Derry BT48 6UJ. Phone 02871260293. It will continue to be open each week on Thursdays and Saturdays 11am to 1pm. Application Forms may be collected at these times and are also available by emailing derrypilgrim@outlook.com. We also have a youth pilgrimage coming with us and any young person 16 -18 years in any Parish may contact us by phone or email for more information. We are also asking any Nurses, Doctors or Care Staff who are interested in joining our Care Team to contact the Pilgrimage Office.

The Lourdes Hospitalité collection, which helps those who wish to go to Lourdes and require care and assistance, is due to take place at weekend Masses on the 8th/9th of February 2025. As in previous years, we appeal to your generosity for this worthwhile cause as we take the pilgrimage forward facing many new challenges.

SPARK: A weekend of fun, faith and friendship for 12–16-year-olds – 21st-23rd February at the Carmelite Retreat Centre, Termonbacca. Spark is a weekend experience which follows core themes from YouCat, as well as stories of role models such as Blessed Carlo Acutis and Sr Clare Crockett, to help young people learn about their faith, while making friends and hopefully having a bit of fun in the process! Cost €80/£70 per person (covers food and board). To book or find out more text or WhatsApp Brendan on +353 86 8067973 or Vivienne on +44 7935 007351.

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 Ireland) 101 or Social Services: Gateway Services, Western HSC Trust, 71314090 and ask for the Duty Social Worker.