




Pilgrim Hearts **Walking with Jesus this Lent**

A Lenten program for parishes and families. 
Inspired by the gospels and the pilgrim Saints of Ireland.



YEAR C



**Pathways
to the Future**

Pope Francis invites us to recite the following prayer in this Jubilee Year (2025)

The Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven,
may the faith you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed hope
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.

Amen

His Holiness, Pope Francis.
www.iubilaeum2025.va

Welcome!

Welcome to “Pilgrim Hearts: Walking in the steps of Jesus this Lent”, a resource designed to help parishes, families, and individuals deepen their faith by journeying with Christ through the Sunday Gospels.

In this Jubilee Year 2025, with its theme of “Pilgrims of Hope”, our Lenten pilgrimage reminds us that we do not walk alone. Together as a parish family we are united in faith and hope, trusting in God’s guidance every step of the way.

Lent is a season of reflection, renewal, and transformation. It invites us to embark on a spiritual pilgrimage, a journey of the heart, where we walk in the steps of Jesus and draw closer to God. Just as Jesus, moved by the spirit went out into the desert we too are called to follow His example with open and “pilgrim hearts”. To find moments out of the busyness of our day and enter into a quiet time; to pause and reflect.

Ireland’s rich spiritual heritage offers us inspiring examples of saints who lived their lives with “pilgrim hearts”. Saints like Patrick, Brigid, Columba, Kevin, Abigail & Oliver Plunkett teach us how to embrace prayer, sacrifice, and trust in God through their faith filled journeys.

This resource offers weekly reflections based on the Sunday gospels, along with prayers and simple concrete actions to live inspired by the scriptures and the lives of the Irish saints. Each week, we take one step closer to the joy of Easter by:

Prayer: Drawing strength from God as we reflect on His Word.

Reflecting as Pilgrims: Opening our hearts to spiritual growth, renewal and hope.

Acting in Faith: Living out the Gospel message through acts of love, kindness and service.

We hope you find the program meaningful, enriching and a source of of inspiration throughout your Lenten journey. May it deepen your faith, offer new insights and help you grow closer to Christ.

Wishing you every blessing this Lent,

Aishling + Fr Paul

Aishling Steen & Fr Paul Byrne (Pathways to The Future Team)

‘A Jubilee year is a sign of reconciliation because it establishes a “favorable time” (cf. 2 Corinthians 6:2) for conversion. We are called to put God at the centre of our lives, growing toward Him and acknowledging His primacy.’

His Holiness, Pope Francis.
Jubilee 2025



Lent - Week One

Theme: Trust in God when facing challenges.

Gospel: Luke 4:1-13 - The Temptation in the Wilderness.

Saint Inspiration: St Patrick, during his captivity on the lonely mountain of Slemish, prayed constantly trusting in God to guide him.



You Are Mine -
David Haas

- Find a quiet place.
- Light a blessed candle.
- Sit for a few moments in the silence.
- Invite God into this time of stillness and reflection.
- Recall the words of the Psalmist, “Be still and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10)
- Scan the QR code and listen to the words of the song, “You are Mine.”



Opening Prayer: Loving God, as we begin this Lenten journey, we turn to you in trust. Just as Jesus was led into the desert, we too experience moments of testing and struggle. Like St Patrick, who found strength in prayer while alone on the mountain, help us to rely on You in times of difficulty. May this season of Lent, deepen our faith, strengthen our hearts and guide us closer to you. Amen

Introduction to the scripture passage

The desert in Scripture often symbolises a place of testing, transformation and encounter with God. Just as the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years, Jesus’ 40 years in the desert reminds us of a time of preparation and reliance on God. Jesus shows us how to remain faithful by trusting In God and turning to His Word.

- Slowly read the gospel passage twice.
- Picture Jesus in the wilderness, hungry and tired, yet unwavering in His trust in God.
- Pay attention to the words or phrases that stand out to you.



Gospel: Luke 4:1-13
The Temptation in the Wilderness

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness, being tempted there by the devil for forty days. During that time he ate nothing and at the end he was hungry. Then the devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a loaf.' But Jesus replied, 'Scripture says: Man does not live on bread alone.'

Then leading him to a height, the devil showed him in a moment of time all the kingdoms of the world and said to him, 'I will give you all this power and the glory of these kingdoms, for it has been committed to me and I give it to anyone I choose. Worship me, then, and it shall all be yours.' But Jesus answered him, 'Scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God,
and serve him alone.'

Then he led him to Jerusalem and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said to him 'throw yourself down from here, for scripture says:

He will put his angels in charge of you

to guard you, and again: They will hold you up on their hand in case you hurt your foot against a stone.' But Jesus answered him, 'It has been said: You must not put the Lord your God to the test.' Having exhausted all these ways of tempting him, the devil left him, to return at the appointed time. (JB)





Reflecting as Pilgrims

- What does Jesus' response to temptation teach us about God?
- Can you recall a time when you felt tested or overwhelmed?
- Who did you turn to in that moment?
- How might God comfort us during these times in our lives?
- Which word or phrase is God inviting you to carry into the week ahead?
- What message might He be speaking into your heart at this time?



St Patrick, patron saint of Ireland.



Just as Jesus faced temptation in the desert, we too face challenges in our daily lives. Patrick spent six years as a slave, often praying over 100 times a day while tending sheep on a mountain. Like St Patrick, who turned to prayer during his most difficult moments, we are called to rely on God when we feel lonely or tempted.

To hear more about the story of St Patrick, just click on the link [Diocese of Down and Connor - The story of St Patrick](#) or scan the QR code.

Acting in Faith

- Create a prayer space with a stone or small cross to symbolise the “desert” or mountain where Patrick prayed.
- Set aside 15 minutes of family prayer each day during Lent. Invite family members to pray for specific intentions. You may want to write them on a piece of paper and place them in a basket in your prayer space.
- Reflect on your hopes as a family this Lent. Are there challenges or difficulties in your home that would like to place before Jesus?
- Call on the intercession of St Patrick to renew the faith in your home with the same confidence he prayed to God as a young man on the mountain.



Pray together: Lord Jesus, help me to live each day with courage and trust in your mercy and goodness. Help me grow closer to you this Lent. In my moments of prayer and reflection, let me hear your voice, in my moments of worry and anxiety ease my mind, in my moments of tiredness and fatigue be with me and carry me through. I place before you my intentions and all my family members, especially those with particular needs. In confidence I place them before your sacred heart.

St Patrick, Patron Saint of Ireland, pray for us!

Lent - Week Two

Theme: To see God's presence in our lives.

Gospel: Luke 9:28-36 - Jesus is Transfigured before them.

Saint Inspiration: St Brigid was known for her radiant faith and generosity, and reflected this light of joy in her everyday life.



Be still and know -
Joy Everingham

- Find a quiet place.
- Light a candle in your prayer space.
- Sit for a few moments in the silence.
- Write down an intention you would like to bring to God.
- Place it in the basket in your prayer space.
- Invite God into this time of stillness and reflection.
- Listen to the words of the song, 'Be still and Know.'



Opening prayer: Lord Jesus, on the mountain of the Transfiguration, You revealed Your divine glory to Peter, James and John. Open our eyes today to recognise your presence. As St Brigid saw and reflected Your light through her love and generosity, help us to become bearers of Your light, sharing Your love with those around us. Guide us on this pilgrimage of faith, that we may be transformed by Your grace. Amen

Introduction to the scripture passage

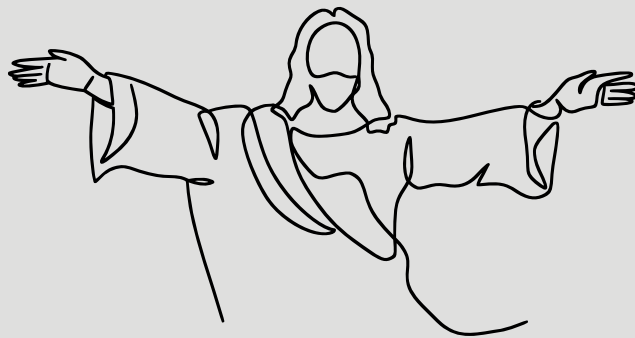
The mountain is often a place of divine revelation in Scripture. In the Transfiguration, Jesus reveals His divine glory, offering the disciples a glimpse of His true nature as the Son of God. The presence of Moses and Elijah symbolises the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets in Jesus. This moment reminds us to open our eyes to God's glory and listen to His beloved Son.

- Slowly read the gospel passage twice.
- Imagine standing with Peter, James and John witnessing the dazzling light of the Transfiguration.
- Which word or phrase might God be speaking into your heart this week?



Gospel: Luke 9:28-36
Jesus is Transfigured before them.

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up the mountain to pray. As he prayed, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became brilliant as lightning. Suddenly there were two men there talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' – He did not know what he was saying. As he spoke, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him.' And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. The disciples kept silence and, at that time, told no one what they had seen. (JB)



Reflecting as Pilgrims



- What does the Transfiguration reveal about who Jesus is?
- Why do you think Jesus revealed His glory only to these 4 apostles?
- What do you think he was preparing them for?
- Where do you see glimpses of God's glory in your own life - through nature, people or experiences?
- Often we only look to God in times of worry and petition but as pilgrims on this earth we are also called to offer our blessings, joy and thanksgiving to God. What would you like to thank God for this week?

St Brigid, the female patron saint of Ireland.



St Brigid shared her family's resources with the poor reflecting God's love and generosity. During Lent we are encouraged to share and give alms to the poor.



To hear more about the story of St Brigid , just click on the link [St. Brigid of Ireland](#) or scan the QR code.

Acting in Faith



- During your prayer time this week, thank God for the moments when you experienced His help, This could have been a time when you experienced the support, kindness and generosity of another person.
- Invite family members to offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for a time when they experienced His love and help.
- Think about opportunities during the week ahead to reflect God's love through acts of kindness. Like St Brigid, we are called to be a light to others through our faith, generosity and acts of mercy.
- You could do this either by intercessory prayer, helping a friend, neighbour or elderly relative or donating to someone in need. It could even be donating to or raising awareness of a charity or fundraiser on your social media page.

Prayer together: Heavenly Father, you created me to know, love and serve you. Help me to be more attentive to the needs of those around me. Help me to see the opportunities to help where I can and to act with generosity and humility in those times of giving and service to others. Give me the strength and fervour of St Brigid to be open to your will and to stand firm in the face of trial and difficulty. Help me be a light to others in some small way; a kind word, a conversation & cup of tea, a text to say I'm thinking of you, a lighted candle, or only if just to listen and be present to another. I place all before you. Amen

St Brigid, pray for us!

Lent - Week Three

Theme: God gives second chances and wants us to grow.

Gospel: Luke 13:1-9 - The Parable of the Fig Tree.

Saint Inspiration: St Columba was born in 521 AD. He was an Irish monk who set about converting pagan Scotland. He repented for early mistakes and became a missionary, spreading the gospel and nurturing the faith of those he encountered along the way.



What A Beautiful
Name- Hillsong

- Light a candle in your prayer space.
- Bring to Jesus any sins or struggles that are impacting you now.
- Jesus tells us that anything we ask of in His name; He will give to us according to His will. (Matthew 7:7)
- Say the name of 'Jesus' slowly several times. Invite Him into your heart and mind; to heal you, to forgive you, to experience His mercy.
- Learn to forgive yourself, because God forgives you!
- Listen to the words of the song, 'What a beautiful name.'



Opening Prayer: God of patience and mercy, You never give up on us. Like the fig tree in the Gospel, we sometimes struggle to bear fruit, but You continue to nurture us with Your love. Help us, like St Columba, to embrace the second chances you offer. May this season of Lent be a time of renewal, growth and deeper trust in Your plan for our lives. Give us the courage to change our hearts and to follow You more faithfully. Amen

Introduction to the scripture passage.

The fig tree is a symbol of Israel and more broadly, each of us. The parable reflects God's patience and mercy, showing that He gives us time to repent and bear fruit in our lives. Like the gardener tending the tree, God lovingly nurtures us, giving us opportunities to grow in faith and love.

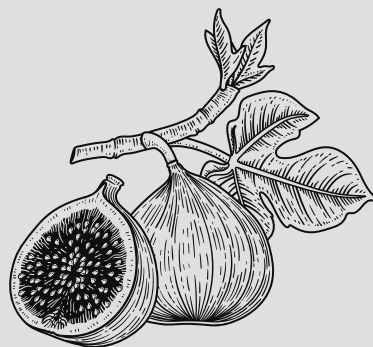
- Slowly read the gospel passage twice.
- Visualise the fig tree, barren and fruitless.
- Think about the care and diligence required by the gardener to help the tree produce the fruit.
- Are there areas of your life that God is calling you to pay more attention to?



Gospel : Luke 13:1-9
The Parable of the Fig Tree

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.'

He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down.'" (JB)





Reflecting as pilgrims

- Think about areas of your life where you are struggling.
- In which area is God patiently calling you to grow?
- Rooting ourselves in Christ each day has the potential to bear much fruit. Are there areas of your life where you need to allow Jesus in to heal you. Areas such as; addiction, gossip, lack of empathy, laziness, selfishness, criticising others, being judgemental, or materialism.
- Sit with the word or phrase that speaks to you in this reading. What message might God be speaking into your heart? What action is He prompting you to take?

St Columba is one of the patron saints of Ireland, Scotland and Derry.

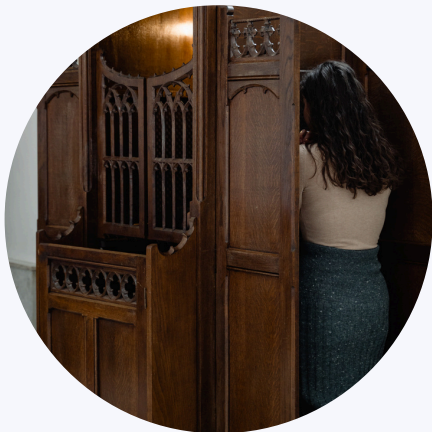


St Columba became one of the most significant figures in the spread of Christianity in Scotland and beyond. His life embodied mission and an ardent love for God.



To hear more about the story of St Columba, just click on the link [St Columba Celtic Church Missionary](#) or scan the QR code.

Acting in faith



- Find out when penitential services will take place in your parish or neighbouring parish. Usually these take place in the weeks leading up to Holy Week.
- Use this time during Lent to do an examination of conscience. Invite family members to do the same. Like St Columba, we all have areas of our lives in which we struggle and need the healing power of the Sacrament of Confession.
- St Columba struggled with pride and a fiery temper which, at times, brought him into conflict with others. He recognised this and sought God's help. It takes humility to do this.
- Ask God to inspire in you a humble heart, ready to recognise areas of sin in your life which need healing in order to grow and flourish in faith.

Pray together: *Lord Jesus, inspired by the gardener's care and St Columba's transformation, may this be a time of healing and reconciliation. Inspire me with confidence to face my struggles and sinfulness with a humble and contrite heart. I know that not only is this pleasing to you but it is required for growth in my relationship with you. Heal all those wounds in my life that have effected my relationship with you and others. Give me the courage to grow in confidence and to place my trust completely in your Divine Mercy. I ask this in your holy name. Amen*

St Columba, pray for us!

Lent - Week Four

Theme: God's mercy and forgiveness.

Gospel: Luke 15:1-3,11-32 -The Prodigal Son.

Saint Inspiration: St Kevin of Glendalough sought solitude to pray and reflect. He inspired others to return to God's mercy.



Psalm 42, Like A Deer-
John Michael Talbot

- Find a quiet place.
- Light a candle and be aware of God's presence.
- Place an image, icon or statue of Jesus in your prayer space.
- Gaze at Jesus as He gazes at you.
- Bring to Him your whole self; your joys, hopes, weaknesses and failings.
- Listen to the words of the song, 'Like a deer.'



Opening prayer: Merciful Father, You welcome us with open arms, no matter how far we have strayed. Like the Father in the parable of the Prodigal Son, You rejoice when we turn back to you. As we reflect on Your mercy today, help us to open our hearts to forgiveness - both receiving it and offering it to others. Inspired by St Kevin, may we find time for quiet reflection and prayer, ever drawing closer to Your love. Amen

Introduction to the scripture passage.

The Father in the parable represents God, whose love and mercy are boundless. The Father's joyful welcome of his son reminds us that no matter how far we stray, God is always ready to forgive and embrace us. The elder brother shows us the importance of letting go of resentment and celebrating others' return to God.

- Slowly read the gospel twice.
- Imagine yourself as each character in the story - the father, the prodigal son, and the elder brother.
- Which do you identify with most?
- Is there an area of your life where you need to experience God's embrace more fully?



Gospel Luke 15:1-3,11-32 The Prodigal Son

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them:

'A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that would come to me." So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery. 'When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch, so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled his belly with the husks the pigs were eating but no one offered him anything. Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants." So he left the place and went back to his father

While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found." And they began to celebrate.

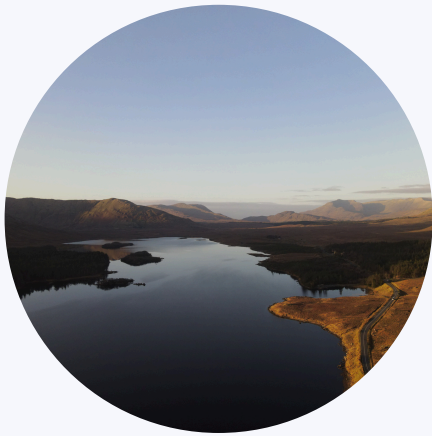
'Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. "Your brother has come" replied the servant "and your father has killed the calf we had fattened because he has got him back safe and sound." He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out to plead with him; but he answered his father, "Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends. But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property - he and his women - you kill the calf we had been fattening." The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.'" (JB)





Reflecting as pilgrims

- What do the actions of the Father teach us about God's love and mercy?
- Why do you think the elder son was resentful on the return of his lost brother?
- Do you struggle to forgive yourself or others? What holds you back?
- Bring to Jesus all your worries and concerns.



St Kevin founded the monastery at Glendalough. He is one of the patron saints of Dublin.

St Kevin lived a simple, prayerful life at Glendalough, drawing pilgrims who were seeking peace and forgiveness.



To learn more about St Kevin just click on the link [St Kevin of Glendalough](#) or scan the QR code.



Acting in faith

- Spend time in prayer and reflect on God's mercy.
- Write down the words, **lost** and **found**. Place them in a visible place in your prayer space.
- Invite family members to do the same.
- Say the prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner."
- Are there areas in you life or in your family life where Christ's healing touch is needed?
- Invite Jesus into that space. Hand it over to him.
- Perhaps this week, along with family or friends, you can visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Pray together: Heavenly Father, you know the moments in my life when I feel lost, alone and ashamed. Teach me to place my trust in your infinite love and mercy which knows no bounds. Inspire my heart with the same confidence of St Kevin who recognised the challenges that he faced and instead of becoming overwhelmed found you in the silence. Teach me to be better at silence, to have the courage and discipline to detach myself from all the distractions in my day and to visit you more often in the quiet place of my heart. I ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen

St Kevin of Glendalough, pray for us!

Lent - Week Five

Theme: Mercy and a fresh start

Gospel: John 8:1-11 - The Woman Caught in Adultery

Saint Inspiration: St Abigail - A woman of faith known for her deep prayer life, healing gifts and commitment to peace and justice.



[Soul of My Saviour-
Faith of our Fathers
Concert. Ireland](#)

- Light a candle in your prayer space.
- Allow yourself to move into a moment of silence and peace.
- Ask yourself; What sort of day did I have today? Perhaps it was a busy day.
- Step away from the busyness and allow God to come to you in the silence.
- Is there anything weighing on your heart and mind today that you wish to bring to Jesus? Don't be afraid to hand it over to Him. Say and repeat the words, 'Jesus, I trust in You.'
- Listen to the words of the song, "Soul of My Saviour."



Opening prayer: God of mercy, You see beyond our past mistakes and offer us a new beginning. Just as Jesus showed compassion to the woman in the gospel, teach us to be people of forgiveness and healing. Like St Abigail, who brought peace and care to those in need, help us to be instruments of Your mercy in our families, communities and the world. Give us the grace to let go of judgement and embrace the path of renewal You offer. Amen

Introduction to the scripture passage.

This passage highlights Jesus' mercy and the call to transformation. The religious leaders bring a woman caught in adultery to Jesus, seeking to condemn her. Instead of judgement, Jesus responds with compassion. This moment reveals that God's mercy does not ignore sin but invites true conversion of the heart and a fresh start. The woman freed from condemnation, is given a new path.

- Slowly read the gospel passage twice.
- Imagine yourself in the crowd. What do you see, hear, feel?
- What does this story teach us about Jesus' mercy?
- Is there a word or phrase in the passage that speaks to your heart?



Gospel: John 8:1-11
The Woman caught in Adultery

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak he appeared in the Temple again; and as all the people came to him, he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman along who had been caught committing adultery; and making her stand there in full view of everybody, they said to Jesus, 'Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery, and Moses has ordered us in the Law to condemn women like this to death by stoning. What have you to say?' They asked him this as a test, looking for something to use against him.

But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their question, he looked up and said, 'If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.' Then he bent down and wrote on the ground again. When they heard this they went away one by one, beginning with the eldest, until Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained standing there. He looked up and said, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir' she replied. 'Neither do I condemn you,' said Jesus 'go away, and do not sin any more.' (JB)





Reflecting as Pilgrims

- There may have been times in your life when you felt judged or ashamed. Be reminded of how Jesus reacted to the adulterous woman in the story.
- Have there been times when you've been quick to judge others?
- How might you better reflect God's mercy in these situations?
- Are there opportunities within your family or social connections to be the peacemaker, particularly in situations that have caused hurt and division?
- Allow God's healing and peace into these situations especially through the power of prayer.

St Abigail of County Claire is patron saint of honey bees and bee keepers.

St Abigail (also known as St Gobnait) was an Irish saint associated with healing, protection and devotion to prayer. Bees are often associated with this saint. According to legend, she used them to heal various ailments and disease and also to protect people from harm. She was known as a healer, and guardian of peace and justice especially for those who were vulnerable or suffered condemnation.



To learn more about the life of St Abigail, click on the link [St Abigail of County Clare](#) or scan the QR code.

Acting in Faith

- This Lent we have covered the lives of 5 well know Irish saints. Perhaps over the next few weeks you and a friend or family members could visit a grotto, shrine or even a monastery associated with an Irish saint.
- Make a day of it; bring along a picnic and a bunch of flowers to place in the grotto or shrine.
- Spend some quiet time in prayer. Thank God for the lives of the Irish saints and the legacy of faith they left behind.
- Which saint most inspires you?



Pray Together: God, Our Father, you are the God of healing, peace and justice. We place before you all those who are suffering judgement, condemnation, and persecution in the world. Like St Abigail, give us the grace to always recognise the opportunity to stand firm in the face of injustice and to be a voice of peace and hope for others who cannot speak for themselves. We ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen

St Abigail, pray for us!

Lent - Week Six

Theme: Faithfulness in the face of suffering.

Gospel: Luke 19: 28-40 Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem & the Passion Narrative.

Saint Inspiration: St Oliver Plunkett was a faithful witness who endured suffering for Christ.



Were you there - stations of the Cross

Francesca La Rosa

- Place a crucifix in your prayer space.
- Light a candle.
- Sit for a few moments in silence.
- Imagine Jesus carrying His heavy Cross.
- Be with Him.
- Listen to the words of the song, "Were you there?"



Opening prayer: Lord Jesus, today we walk with You into Jerusalem waving palms and shouting, "Hosanna". Yet, we know that this journey will soon lead to the Cross. Give us the courage to follow You, not just in moments of joy when everything is going ok, but also in times of suffering. Like St Oliver Plunkett who remained faithful in the face of trials, help us to trust in You even when the road is difficult. When we feel weak strengthen us, when we are afraid, give us courage, when we struggle to love, remind us of Your sacrifice. Amen

Introduction to the scripture passage.

Palm Sunday marks Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem where He is greeted with palm branches and shouts of, "Hosanna!". Yet within days these same voices will turn to cries of, "Crucify Him!" This reminds us of how fickle 'the crowd' can be. The Passion narrative invites us to walk with Jesus as pilgrims by His side from the Last Supper, betrayal, trial, and crucifixion to His death. As we listen let us reflect:

- Read through the passage slowly.
- Where am I in this story?
- Am I like Peter, afraid to stand with Jesus?
- Like the crowd, easily swayed?
- Like Simon of Cyrene, helping to carry the Cross?
- How do I remain faithful to Christ even in difficult times?



Luke 19: 28-40
Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem &
the Passion Narrative.

Key: N. Narrator. ✕ Jesus. O. Other single speaker. C. Crowd, or more than one speaker.

N. The elders of the people and the chief priests and scribes rose, and they brought Jesus before Pilate.

They began their accusation by saying,

C. We found this man inciting our people to revolt, opposing payment of the tribute to Caesar, and claiming to be Christ, a king.

N. Pilate put to him this question:

O. Are you the king of the Jews?

N. He replied,

✕ It is you who say it.

N. Pilate then said to the chief priests and the crowd,

O. I find no case against this man.

N. But they persisted,

C. He is inflaming the people with his teaching all over Judaea; it has come all the way from Galilee, where he started, down to here.

N. When Pilate heard this, he asked if the man were a Galilean; and finding that he came under Herod's jurisdiction he passed him over to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

Herod was delighted to see Jesus; he had heard about him and had been wanting for a long time to set eyes on him; moreover, he was hoping to see some miracle worked by him. So he questioned him at some length; but without getting any reply. Meanwhile the chief priests and the scribes were there, violently pressing their accusations. Then Herod, together with his guards, treated him with contempt and made fun of him; he put a rich cloak on him and sent him back to Pilate. And though Herod and Pilate had been enemies before, they were reconciled that same day.

Pilate then summoned the chief priests and the leading men and the people. He said,

O. You brought this man before me as a political agitator. Now I have gone into the matter myself in your presence and found no case against the man in respect of all the charges you bring against him. Nor has Herod either, since he has sent him back to us. As you can see, the man has done nothing that deserves death, So I shall have him flogged and then let him go.

N. But as one man they howled,

C. Away with him! Give us Barabbas!

N. (This man had been thrown into prison for causing a riot in the city and for murder.)

Pilate was anxious to set Jesus free and addressed them again, but they shouted back,

C. Crucify him! Crucify him!

N. And for the third time he spoke to them,

O. Why? What harm has this man done? I have found no case against him that deserves death, so I shall have him punished and then let him go.

N. But they kept on shouting at the top of their voices, demanding that he should be crucified. And their shouts were growing louder.

Pilate then gave his verdict: their demand was to be granted. He released the man they asked for, who had been imprisoned for rioting and murder, and handed Jesus over to them to deal with as they pleased.

As they were leading him away they seized on a man, Simon from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and made him shoulder the cross and carry it behind Jesus. Large numbers of people followed him, and of women too, who mourned and lamented for him. But Jesus turned to them and said,

✠ Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children. For the days will surely come when people will say, 'Happy are those who are barren, the wombs that have never borne, the breasts that have never suckled!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!'; to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if men use the green wood like this, what will happen when it is dry?

N. Now with him they were also leading out two other criminals to be executed.

When they reached the place called The Skull, they crucified him there and the two criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left. Jesus said,

✠ Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.

N. Then they cast lots to share out his clothing.

The people stayed there watching him. As for the leaders, they jeered at him, saying,

C. He saved others, let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.

N. The soldiers mocked him too, and when they approached to offer vinegar they said,

C. If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.

N. Above him there was an inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals hanging there abused him, saying,

O. Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us as well.

N. But the other spoke up and rebuked him:

O. Have you no fear of God at all? You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

N. He replied,

✠ Indeed, I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise.

N. It was now about the sixth hour and, with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle; and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said,

✠ Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

N. With these words he breathed his last.

All kneel and pause a moment

When the centurion saw what had taken place, he gave praise to God and said,

O. This was a great and good man.

N. And when all the people who had gathered for the spectacle saw what had happened, they went home beating their breasts.

All his friends stood at a distance; so also did the women who had accompanied him from Galilee, and they saw all this happen. (JB)



Reflecting as Pilgrims



- Where do you see yourself in the story?
- What does Jesus' suffering teach us about love, sacrifice and forgiveness?
- Jesus tells us that the greatest act of love is to lay down your life for another. (John 15:13) . Laying down our lives doesn't always mean great, dramatic gestures - it often means choosing love in small, hidden ways, just as Jesus did in His daily life before He made the ultimate sacrifice. In what ways can we follow Jesus in our everyday lives?

St Oliver Plunkett

St Oliver Plunkett was the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland. During a time of persecution in Ireland he was outlawed but continued to minister the sacraments in secret giving hope to the Irish people. Eventually he was arrested, falsely accused of treason and martyred in 1681. He even forgave his accusers and remained faithful to Jesus until his very end.



To find out more about St Oliver Plunkett click the link [The story of Irish Martyr St Oliver Plunkett](#) or scan the QR code.

Acting in Faith

As you prepare to enter into Holy Week perhaps you can think about concrete actions you can take to reflect self giving love.

- Caring for an elderly parent or supporting a sick relative.
- Prioritising time with family.
- Making time to pray as a family especially moving into Holy Week.
- Why not invite a friend, neighbour or family member who may feel disconnected from their parish community to attend the liturgies of Holy Week, for example: Penitential Services, Spy Wednesday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter.
- Personal Invitation has the greatest impact!



Pray Together: Jesus, as we enter into Holy Week, help us to stay close to you. In times of joy and suffering may we remain faithful, like St Oliver Plunkett, trusting in Your love and mercy. We especially call to mind those who are carrying particularly heavy crosses. Help them to know that You are walking beside them helping to carry the load. Give us the courage to walk with You to the Cross this Lent, knowing that it leads to the hope of resurrection. Amen

St Oliver Plunkett, pray for us!

We hope this program has enriched your journey and provided meaningful reflection along the way. Your feedback is valuable to us, and we'd love to hear your thoughts. Please let us know how this experience has impacted you and how we can continue to support you on your faith journey.

You can do so by emailing: a.steen@downandconnor.org

Thank you!

Scripture quotations taken from the Jerusalem Bible
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