

St. Mary's Parish Dungarvan

March 2021



Lent 2021

How often do we hear it said that the past year has been a year like no other? Just over two weeks into Lent last year, the first lockdown began. That lasted until the end of June 2020. This year we were unable to make the usual beginning to Lent with the blessing and distribution of ashes. Instead, we made the sign of the cross on our foreheads as a reminder of the ashes of Ash Wednesday and of our intention to do something for Lent.

COVID-19 – A Living Lent.

Each year we hear about living Lent – what we might do to live the weeks of Lent better. COVID-19 has stopped us in our tracks. In a sense, COVID-19 is a prolonged Lent! It is a living Lent. There may be little need to take on anything extra this Lent. The restrictions placed on us by COVID-19 have made life harder and brought their own pain, suffering and isolation to every age group, but especially to the sick and those in hospitals and care homes whose loved ones are unable to visit and to those who are unable to mourn their loved ones in the way they would like to.

Prayer, Fasting and Giving.

Prayer, fasting and giving are the three traditional practices of Lent. We can bring those three into every day. We can say a prayer each day for everyone affected by COVID-19. Knowing that we are united in prayer to people everywhere can be a source of strength and consolation to those who need it most at this time. As to 'giving up', perhaps we are already doing enough of that, but we can make it part of our Lent. Each country in the world is suffering due to COVID-19, but of course, poorer countries around the world are suffering more than others. That's why our Lenten Trócaire Box is even more important this year. Boxes are available in the church and in the porches. This year the focus is on South Sudan, the world's newest country which gained its independence from Sudan in 2011. Many millions need basic necessities of food, shelter and education. It continues to be true that every little helps.

From Pope Francis, Message for Lent 2021.

‘To experience Lent with love means caring for those who suffer or feel abandoned and fearful because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In these days of deep uncertainty about the future, let us keep in mind the Lord’s word to his Servant, “Fear not, for I have redeemed you” (Is 43:1). In our charity, may we speak words of reassurance and help others to realize that God loves them as sons and daughters’.

A Prayer for Lent.

Lord, on this day of Lent, we continue a time of reflection on the meaning of Jesus’ Suffering, Death and Resurrection

I give myself wholeheartedly to you these Lenten days.

Help me to renew my love for you and to reach out to others who are in need.

I make the sign of the cross on my forehead, as a reminder of the signing with ashes on Ash Wednesday – in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

I take to heart the words of the Gospel: ‘Repent and believe the Gospel’.

I make my own a prayer from Ash Wednesday’s Mass: ‘Come back to the Lord with all your heart; leave the past in ashes, and turn to God with tears and fasting, for he is slow to anger and ready to forgive’.

Have mercy on me, O God

Young People and Lent.

An invitation for young adults aged 18 – 35 to get together with other young people for an informal hour long zoom gathering each Sunday from 7 – 8pm, continues on until Sunday, March 28th. If you can’t make it every week you are welcome to join whenever you can.

Contact youthministry@waterfordlismore.ie

Prayer of St. Patrick

May the strength of God pilot us. May the power of God preserve us.

May the wisdom of God instruct us. May the hand of God protect us.

May the way of God direct us. May the shield of God defend us.

May the host of heaven guard us, against snares of evil and the temptations of the world. Amen.

St. Patrick's Icon is on display in St Mary's Parish Church

St. Patrick, Apostle to the Irish, holds **the Bible** in his hand -- he brought us the Good News of God's Word.

St. Patrick, the bishop, **dressed in priest's vestments**, wears the **mitre**, and carries **the shepherd's staff, the crozier**.

There is a very strong emphasis on the Blessed Trinity: **the stole** which he wears around his neck has **three crosses** as does **the halo** around his head.

The circle to his right represents God without beginning or end. **The three sides of the triangle:** Father; Son and Holy Spirit. **The hand** of God the Father; **the Cho Rho** (The Greek Ch and R of Christ) for Jesus and **the dove** for the Holy Spirit.

The shamrock in the centre, which St. Patrick is said to have used to preach about the three persons in God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

To his left are the opening words (in Latin) from St. Patrick's

Confessions: **"I am Patrick, a sinner, the most unlearned of men, the lowliest of all the faithful, utterly worthless in the eyes of many."**

The Bible which he carries, **the Celtic Cross** and **the fire on the Hill of Tara, the Paschal Fire**, which he is said to have lighted on Holy Saturday night all point to the faith which he brought us.

Naomh Padraig, gui orainn.

St. Patrick, pray for us.

Celebrations and Devotions in St. Mary's Parish Church during Lent 2021.

Mass on Sundays: **11am only. Monday**, 9.30am Mass with Prayer to Our Mother of Perpetual Help. **Tuesday**, 9.30am Mass. **Wednesday**, 9.30am Mass with Prayer to St. Joseph. **Thursday**, 9.30am Mass followed by a short period of Exposition and Benediction. **Friday, 9.30am Mass. Stations of the Cross at 3pm. Saturday**, 11am Mass followed by a decade of the rosary. **Saturday Evening**, 7.30pm Vigil Mass. **All broadcast on 98.5fm.**

The church is open each day, Monday to Thursday from 10am until 3.30pm. During Lent, Stations of the Cross will be broadcast each Friday at 3pm, therefore the Church will close at 3pm each Friday during Lent. **On Saturdays and Sundays** the Church is open from 11.30am until 3.30pm. On the occasion of a funeral, the church will open from after the funeral until 3.30pm. **You are welcome to drop in to say a prayer.**

It is vital to sanitise your hands as you enter and leave.

Parish Office. is open each day, Monday to Friday from 10 am—1pm!

2 pm—3.30 pm. (3pm Friday) Parish Website www.dungarvanparish.ie.

Year of St. Joseph. (Part 3)

Pope Francis already had a connection with St. Joseph when he was living in Argentina. It was in the church of St. Joseph in Buenos Aires where, in 1953, the 17-year-old Jorge Mario Bergoglio discovered his vocation and declared his desire to dedicate his life to God and people.

Statue of St. Joseph Sleeping.

A visible sign of Pope Francis's devotion to St. Joseph is the statue of St. Joseph Sleeping on his table. Pope Francis shared the story of the statue of St. Joseph Sleeping with families in Manila on January 6th, 2015. He said:

“I also want to tell you something very personal. I have a great love of St. Joseph, because he is a man of silence and strength. On my table, I have a statue of St. Joseph sleeping. Even when he is asleep, he is taking care of the Church! Yes, we know that he can do that. So when I have a problem, a difficulty, I write a little note and put it under St. Joseph, so that he can dream about it! In other words, I tell him pray for this problem.”

It's like asking St. Joseph to 'sleep on it', and perhaps put in a word to God to solve difficult situations and help the needy.

St. Joseph Sleeping.

The image of St. Joseph sleeping is taken straight from St. Matthew's Gospel. There, in a number of dreams, we read how God made known his plans to Joseph in his dreams. We read how Joseph, like Mary, was open to what God wanted him to do.



Devotion to St. Joseph

Wednesday each week is St Joseph's Day.

March is St. Joseph's Month

March 19th St. Joseph. Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary