

Mallow and Mourneabbey Parishes Newsletter

First Sunday of Lent Year B

Sunday 21st February 2021

Level 5 restrictions continue to apply

All Masses and Prayer services continue to be live streamed and are available on line on the parish website.

Masses at the usual times in St Mary's this coming week

10 am Mass daily Monday to Saturday

Saturday Vigil at 6.30 pm

Sunday Masses at 8.30 am and 11 am

Please note that there are **two Lenten station Masses at 7.30 pm on Monday and Tuesday this coming week**

Holy Hour Sunday at 7.30 pm

Stations of the Cross on all Wednesdays and Fridays at 7.30 pm for the weeks of Lent

Lenten Station Envelopes can be dropped into any of the priests houses in the coming week. We thank you for your continued support of the parish clergy in these challenging times for all of us.

Be assured of our prayers.

The churches of the parish are open for daily prayer from 10.30 am to 6.00 p.m.

Please note that in the case of a funeral that the church is for immediate family only and remains closed to the public.

Thank you for your co-operation and understanding. Let us pray earnestly that the churches will open soon for public worship.

The priest on duty for the coming week is **Fr Jimmy Greene** who can be contacted at 085 8471249

Please take a **Trocaire box** for the season of Lent—they are available in the parish churches. Thank you.

Grow in Love of the Lord - two sessions take place via Zoom this week on Tuesday and Thursday at 7.30 pm for **parents of First Holy Communion children.**

Enquiries please to Fr Andrew Carvill if you have not yet received the Zoom link via email.

Thought for the day

The First Sunday of Lent describes the journey of Jesus and his sojourn in the wilderness for 40 days. This mirrors the First Reading where Noah and his family were in the ark during the flood. 40 is also the number of years that the people of Israel spent in the wilderness.

Lent is a season of 40 days (if you exclude Sundays) traditionally given over to prayer, penance and almsgiving. It is a tenth of the year (approximately) and a season we do not particularly relish. Yet in the natural order of things there are different seasons. Not every season is a harvest. There is a time of allowing land to lie fallow. There appears to be nothing happening but the soil is being renewed and made ready for a new crop. Similarly trees and shrubs need to be pruned in order to be made more fruitful. Nature has much to teach us. Even in our own lives we know the need to shed excess (weight!) or to declutter in order to give ourselves more room and breathing space. There is merit in the giving away of our unwanted possessions.

As children we gave up sweets and crisps and other treats for Lent. As we grow older we are encouraged to practice almsgiving as well. Fasting and abstinence are sometimes necessary for our health—diet and changes of lifestyle are widely accepted necessities for better physical and mental health.

We are creatures of habit. About 40 % of what we do each day we do out of habit. A newly acquired habit takes approximately 30 days to become something we automatically do.

There are times of the year when we have an annual spring cleaning, audit or stock-taking. This increases efficiency and weeds out unhelpful clutter or mitigates future losses and increases productivity.

So there is much wisdom in having a Lenten season. This is a time of spiritual renewal—a spiritual stock-taking, a detachment from those things that impede us as disciples of Christ so that we follow Him more faithfully and freely. It is a time of penance, of seeking forgiveness and healing, a time of letting go of the baggage of guilt, grievances and wrongs. It is also a time of intercession for one another. In this time of Covid let us pray more fervently for the crisis to end.