

## **Swords– St. Colmcille’s/Drynam – Our Lady of the Visitation**

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3rd Sunday of Lent

### **Lent-Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving**

*“Turn to me and have mercy on me for I am alone and poor”*

**Newsletter Sunday 23rd March 2014**



We are already at the third week of Lent – it certainly moves. It might be an opportune time to reflect upon the three traditional pillars of Lenten observance: prayer; fasting and almsgiving. The key to owning and accepting these practices is to see their link to baptismal renewal. As an aside, how are the Lenten promises going? If you have ‘fallen’ just pick yourself up, shake off the dust and start again

**Prayer:** More time given to prayer during Lent should draw us closer to the Lord. We might pray especially for the grace to live out our baptismal promises more fully. We might pray for the elect who will be baptised at Easter and support their conversion journey by our prayer. We might pray for all those who will celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation with us during Lent that they will be truly renewed in their baptismal commitment.

**Fasting:** Fasting is one of the most ancient practices linked to Lent. In fact, the paschal fast predates Lent as we know it. The early Church fasted intensely for two days before the celebration of the Easter Vigil. This fast was later extended and became a 40-day period of fasting leading up to Easter. Vatican II called us to renew the observance of the ancient paschal fast: "...let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be celebrated everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the Resurrection may be attained with uplifted and clear mind"

Fasting is more than a means of developing self-control. It is often an aid to prayer, as the pangs of hunger remind us of our hunger for God. The first reading on the Friday after Ash Wednesday points out another important dimension of fasting. The prophet Isaiah insists that fasting without changing our behaviour is not pleasing to God. "This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own" (Is 58:6-7).

Fasting should be linked to our concern for those who are forced to fast by their poverty, those who suffer from the injustices of our economic and political structures, those who are in need for any reason. Thus fasting, too, is linked to living out our baptismal promises. By our Baptism, we are charged with the responsibility of showing Christ's love to the world, especially to those in need. Fasting can help us realise the suffering that so many people in our world experience every day, and it should lead us to greater efforts to alleviate that suffering. Abstaining from meat traditionally also linked us to the poor, who could seldom afford meat for their meals. It can do the same today if we remember the purpose of abstinence and embrace it as a spiritual link to those whose diets are sparse and simple. That should be the goal we set for ourselves—a sparse and simple meal. Avoiding meat while eating lobster misses the whole point!

**Almsgiving:** It should be obvious at this point that almsgiving, the third traditional pillar, is linked to our baptismal commitment in the same way. It is a sign of our care for those in need and an expression of our gratitude for all that God has given to us. Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral elements of the Christian way of life we began when we were baptised. "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to **one** of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me" (Mt.25:40)

**Fr. Michael Carey Adm**

**Mass Intentions for this coming week: St Colmcille's:**

<b>Mon</b> 8.00 am People of the Parish	<b>Sat 6.30pm</b> Catherine O’Gorman, Elizabeth Flynn & Des Burrows
<b>Mon</b> 10.00am Bartle Savage	
<b>Tues</b> 8.00 Thomas & Esther Larkin	<b>Sun 8.30am</b> Vera Barker
<b>Tues</b> 10.00am Eugene Lawlor/Walsh & Hickey	<b>Sun 10.00am</b> Mary O’Connor James
<b>Wed</b> 8.00am Michael & Mary Savage	<b>Sun 11.30am</b> Jennie & Donie Stapleton Jean Stapleton MM
<b>Wed</b> 10.00am Cecilia Daly	
<b>Thurs</b> 8.00am Seamus Byrne	<b>Sun 7.30</b> Bernadette & Jim McConville
<b>Thurs</b> 10.00am Anna, Bridget & Gretta Savage	
<b>Fri</b> 8.00am Kathleen Byrne	
<b>Fri</b> 10.00am Mary Hunter	
<b>Sat</b> 10.00am Mass of Thanksgiving	

*The Visitation of the BVM*

**Church of the Visitation Drynam**

Today we are very happy to welcome Bishop Raymond Field to Drynam to say 12:00 Mass. There will be time for a cup of tea afterwards and all are welcome.



**Third Sunday of Lent**

Today we are greatly helped by the wonderful Gospel of the Woman at the Well. On the third attempt, Jesus finally gets through to her but after that there is no stopping her. She represents us: what do I thirst for? What is the most important thing in my life? Where do I now find God? By relentless challenge and resolute honesty, we too can be led to that encounter with Jesus, which changes everything, “giving life a new horizon and a decisive direction”. May we come to believe because we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the saviour of the world.

**Prayer** - In the midst of the ordinary things, loving God, you call us to the deeper realities: your thirst for us and our thirst for you. Never let us be satisfied, until we come to the springs of living water, welling up for eternal life

**Tuesday 25th March - The Annunciation of the Lord**

‘Giving her consent to God’s word, Mary becomes the mother of Jesus. Espousing the divine will for salvation wholeheartedly, without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person and to the work of her Son: she did so in order to serve the mystery of redemption with him and dependent on him, by God’s grace’



**ADMINISTRATOR’S COLUMN**

*Antiphon - “The water I shall give will become a spring welling up to eternal life.”*

**Confession**

When we examine our conscience prior to going to Confession, we usually ask ourselves, ‘What sins have I committed?’ We rarely look at our sins of omission, which may well be our worst sins. We may think we are good simply because we don’t do anyone any harm, But what about the good we fail to do?

From a Christian point of view, there is only one real failure in life – the failure to love. If one’s love is active, failure to reach perfection in other areas of one’s life will be forgiven. But there is no substitute for active love.

**Holiday**



There are still a number of places available for our Parish Holiday. As I said it's a lovely and safe way of travelling for anyone who hasn't holidayed anywhere in a while and we are going to a lovely part of Italy. The hotel has a swimming pool and a private beach. See box in newsletter

**DO THIS IN MEMORY**

I welcome the boys and girls and their families to the 6.30pm Vigil Mass and the 10.00am Sunday Mass as part of their Parish based preparation programme for the Sacrament of First Eucharist. I would also like to thank the parents who are part of the organising committee who met during the week to prepare these Masses.

**A Remembrance Mass**

Last week Bishop Raymond Field presided at a Mass in St. Colmcille's Church for the late Ms. Olivia Clinton, teacher of St. Colmcille's BNS who died tragically in January. It was a prayerful occasion which I hope brought comfort to her parents and family who were at the Mass. I thank Mr. Jim Bennett and the teachers for the beautiful Liturgy and I thank Fr. Peter McCarron the BNS school chaplain. I also thank the parishioners who attended to show their solidarity with the Clinton family. A special thank you to the boys choir who sang magnificently during the Mass.

**A REFLECTIVE SENTENCE:** After I discovered that there is a God, it was impossible for me not to live for him alone.... Bl. Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916, Christian hermit in the Sahara Desert)

**Ministers of the Eucharist-St. Colmcille's**

All Ministers of the Eucharist in St. Colmcille's are invited to 75 minutes of prayer, practical considerations and light refreshments on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm in the Parish Church. I would really appreciate if you could make this gathering-it will also be used to arrange the Easter Timetable



**Evening Mass in River Valley**

If you desire to go to Mass for Lent and the mornings don't suit, there is an evening Mass in St. Finian's River Valley at 7.30pm Monday to Friday for the season of Lent

**Ministers of the Word – St. Colmcille's**

All Ministers of the Word in St. Colmcille's are invited to 75 minutes of prayer, practical considerations and light refreshments on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 7.30pm in the Parish Church. I would really appreciate if you could make this gathering- it will also be used to arrange the Easter Timetable



**Living Liturgy**

One way to deepen our faith and come to know Jesus better is by spending more time with him as a friend. Lent is an opportune time to become more attentive to Jesus' presence – especially in prayer – and encounter him as One who loves us, teaches us, and gives us life-giving water. Another way is to remind ourselves of the blessings God has already given us and remember that these truly are gifts from God. Yet another way to deepen our faith and come to know Jesus better is to increase our self-understanding as Body of Christ and make concrete efforts to act like Christ's Body. Things like saying thank you and smiling at another who looks sad or depressed are simple acts, but they remind us of who we are: Christ for others. These kinds of everyday acts remind us that, like the Samaritan woman, we proclaim Jesus' presence by the truth of our own lives

### **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Lent is a Penitential Season and therefore the Sacrament of Penance is very much part of it. A reminder of Confession times will not go amiss.

**St. Colmcille's** –Saturday morning from 10.30am to 11.30am and Saturday evening from 6.00pm to 6.20pm.

**Drynam:** - Mon; Tues; Wed and Fri after the 9.20am Mass

Details of Holy Week Penitential Services to follow later

### **SPLENDOURS OF VENETO based in Sottomarina**

**Swords/Drynam Parish Holiday** *Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> – Tues 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014, Adriatic Coast*

*Chioggia is a quaint picturesque town on the Venetian lagoon about 25km south of Venice. It is in fact known as "Little Venice" because of its narrow streets, hump back canals and is completely unspoilt and full of character. A bridge leads to the neighbouring island of Sottomarina with its long sandy beaches bordering the Adriatic. This is where we will be based for the week*

**Price: €870.00 per person sharing**

Price includes: Return flights Dublin-Venice 7 nights' accommodation : 4 star hotel; half board; B&B and Dinner., Day excursion to Venice by boat and day excursions to Ravenna and Padua

Extras: Single room supplement €25.00 per night for duration of stay Airport taxes: €85.00. baggage fee €40 Insurance: €36.00 (66+double premium applies)

*. Please contact Colette at the Parish Office for booking (€250 deposit per person). Balance 10 weeks before departure. For more details telephone Colette: 8407277.*

*Brochures at back of Church.*