

ALERT FOR PAIN

When Dessie came into our family, we all knew exactly what my mother meant – except Dessie who was often the one comforting the rest of us. Dessie had Down syndrome and was the happiest person to inhabit this earth. He just loved people and people loved Dessie. His mischievous personality kept everyone around him happy and he had a keen sense and awareness of vulnerability around him. When someone was sick or distressed, he knew they needed a hug. Dessie was a sensor and his antenna was out there, alert for suffering in all its forms. When my mother died, Dessie was very much part of the wake scene and delighted in inviting everyone to the hotel for a meal after the funeral!

However, at the time when family and friends were bidding their final farewell to their loved one, Dessie was nowhere to be found. Eventually, we found him outside the house, sitting in the passenger's seat of the hearse. All the pleading in the world could not move him to another car. No one could budge him. And then we knew the reason. He was a man on a mission and no one was going to move him! He said he had to show the driver the way to take our mum to heaven. Dessie was ahead of all of us. This young man of faith knew that our family needed to be comforted in the sure knowledge

that our mother was in the hands of a loving God, and he was showing us all the way. In Dessie's mind, the cemetery was the garden of God and he felt responsible for taking our Mum home!

THE GIFT OF COMFORTING

In a world grown coarse and cold, where people are commodified and too often cast aside, I think Dessie's action best sums up what the gift of Comforting the Afflicted actually means. This gift of the Holy Spirit, which is often misunderstood, is not about pity for someone. It touches the heart of our identity and our Christian life. It is a piety and not pity and comes from within; it is a relationship with God that changes how we live. The gift of piety so exemplified by Dessie in the story above is being able to rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep, welcome those in need. Or, as St. Paul tells us, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, a gentle Father and the God of all consolation, who comforts us in all our sorrows, so that we can offer others, in their sorrows, the consolation we have received from God." (2 Co 1: 3-7) ■



Today's readings

Am 8:4-7
1 Tm 2:1-8
Lk 16:1-13

GOD'S WORD TODAY

In today's Gospel, Jesus uses a rather unusual parable about a steward's sharp practice to make a point about our relationship with God. The steward has been accused of wasting his master's property. He knows he's about to lose his job and end up with nothing. Back in the time of Jesus, losing your job meant becoming destitute, unless you had friends or family to help you out.

Realising he's not able for physical work and too proud to go begging, the steward does some quick thinking. He needs to act, and fast. So he hatches a plan that might provide him with some friends and security in the future. He calls his master's debtors one by one, and cancels or reduces the amount of money they owe his master. He calculates that they will be grateful and will look out for him when he is jobless. It is an unethical and rather desperate plan, but it works. When the master discovers what the steward has done, far from being angry with him, he is impressed. He praises the steward for being clever enough to know what to do in this desperate situation.

In telling this parable, Jesus isn't condoning improper behaviour. Rather, he uses it to stress the importance of taking decisive action when decisive action is needed. The steward hadn't been doing his job properly and so faced the sack. But when his future security was on the line, he acted quickly. He didn't hesitate. He saw that he needed to act – and he did.

It must be the same with our spiritual life. Our relationship with God is of paramount significance in our life, but we can neglect it and drift along, or get distracted by other things. If we neglect our relationship with God, if our spiritual future is threatened, then we need to act as quickly and decisively as that astute steward.

We need to be as clever in safeguarding our spiritual future – and the salvation of our souls – as the clever people of this world are when their financial future is in peril.

18 September 2016 – 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C

Psalter Week 1

Stou(ace

SERIES: EXPLORING THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

Season colour: GREEN

In this series, Deirdre Mullan RSM, explores the Spiritual Works of Mercy.



COMFORT THE AFFLICTED

My mother understood this counsel and lived by it at every opportunity. In my home in Derry, I often heard her use the term, "God bless the holy mark." As a child, I did not really know what a holy mark was, but gradually came to realise it was a term she used with the fullness of compassion when she came upon a child, or any person with an illness, terrible sickness or disability.

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TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Sunday 18th September 2016

Jesus lamented the fact that the “children of light” are not as astute at doing good as the wicked are at looking after themselves. It may be that some of our ineffectiveness in doing good arises from a lack of total commitment to God. We cannot have it both ways; self-concerned and love of God don't mix.

JUBILEE OF MERCY FOR EDUCATION “To Learn and Teach Mercy” – A Year of Mercy one day conference for those involved in education organised by the Diocese of Elphin. Speakers: John Waters: Writer and Journalist; Senator Joan Freeman: Founder of Pieta House; Kevin Doran, Bishop of Elphin; Kate Liffey, National Director for Catechetics, Irish Episcopal conference, John Carroll, Chaplain, Sligo University Hospital. The day will involve a prayer service with the participation of local schools and end with a panel discussion. Saturday 24th September 2016, Summerhill College, Sligo; 10.00am—4.00pm (Lunch Included); Booking Essential: contact: tomlinson.p@hotmail.com or by telephoning 071 9151083; Donations welcome on the day – All are welcome!

PARISH DEVELOPMENT & RENEWAL GATHERING

Elphin Diocese's 2016 Parish Development & Renewal Gathering to take place on Saturday, 15th October. Details available at www.elphindiocese.ie/gathering. All welcome.

YOUTH ALPHA

Interested in supporting Christian Faith enquiry / development of teenagers? See www.elphindiocese.ie/youth-alpha for details of upcoming Youth Alpha Information & Training Evenings in Sligo (28th September) and Athlone (5th October). All welcome.

CATECHEDRAL NW HOSPICE COFFEE MORNING A sincere thank you to St. Mary's office staff who organised the coffee morning, under the guidance of Louise McTernan, in aid of North West Hospice in the Gillooly Hall on Thursday last. Thank you also to all who supported the coffee morning. The total amount collected was €508.25. Well done!

PARENTS OF 1st HOLY COMMUNION CHILDREN

A meeting of all parents of children making their 1st Holy Communion in 2017 will be held tomorrow evening, Monday, 19th September at 8pm in the Gillooly Hall.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK Lord, we are all made in your image. Grant me humility of mind and simplicity of spirit. Amen.

READINGS FOR SUNDAY NEXT 25th SEPT 1st Reading: Amos. 6:1. 4-7; 2nd Reading: 1 Timothy 6:11-16; Gospel: Luke 16:19-31.

FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK Mon 19th St. Januarius, Bishop of Benevento, Tues 20th Andrew Kim Tae-gon, 1st Korean priest & Paul Chong Ha-sang, a catechist, Wed 21st St. Matthew, the tax collector, Fri 23rd St. Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio), stigmatist & friend of all who suffer and St. Eunan (Adomnán), abbot in Iona.

SLIGO CATHEDRAL PARISH – 2200 FAMILIES

SUNDAY 11th SEPTEMBER PARISH ENV: €1,904 PL/STAND. ORD: €1,060
THANK YOU for your contribution.

ST MARY'S PRESBYTERY ☎ 071 9162670 SACRISTY ☎ 071 9161261

BINGO - GILLOOLY HALL - TONIGHT, 18th September at 9.00 p.m.

This week's jackpot is €2,250.

MISSION - SEPTEMBER 25TH - 30TH

Sligo Parishes Cluster Mission starts Sunday 25th September, 2016, in the Cathedral at 7.30pm and will continue each evening at 7.30pm until Friday 30th September. The mission is being conducted by the Redemptorist Mission Team from Limerick. School mission activities will take place during the week of the mission.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Monday - Friday at 7.00am *Mission Mass* in the Cathedral (replacing regular 8am Mass)

Monday - Friday at 7.30am *Mission Café* in the Gillooly Hall for a spot of breakfast after Mass.

Monday - Friday at 10.30am *Mid morning Mass* in the Cathedral including a brief reflection from a mission team member on the theme of the day.

Sunday - Friday at 7.30pm. *Evening session* in the Cathedral.

Sunday - Thursday at 9.00pm *Night time prayer* on the theme of the day by candlelight in the Cathedral.

MISSION THEMES

Sun 25th Sept God calls us to gather!

Mon 26th Sept Gathering around the God who speaks with us

Tues 27th Sept Gathering around the God who gives us the Eucharist. Part 1

Wed 28th Sept Gathering around the God who gives us the Eucharist. Part 2

Thurs 29th Sept Gathering around the God who heals us

Fri 30th Sept Gathering around the God who anoints and commissions us

Concluding event of the Mission is 7.30pm on Friday, 30th September.

This mission will surely be a wonderful opportunity for all of us to renew our faith, and maybe for some of us 'to start again', and thus begin again to appreciate the joys of active faith practice! So all are invited to participate in the mission, and parents do please encourage your children to get involved not only in the school mission activities, but also in the standard mission ceremonies.

For further information please log into www.sligocathedral.ie

JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY - POPE FRANCIS' WORDS

“Mercy can truly contribute to the building up of a more humane world.”

DATES TO REMEMBER

A TRIDUUM in preparation for the **FEAST OF ST. PADRE PIO** will take place at The Franciscan Friary, Rosstown, Co. Donegal from Tuesday, 20th September until Friday, 23rd September. There will be Mass, Homily and Blessing of Relic at 7.30pm each evening. Preacher is Fr. Pius McLaughlin, OFM, who met Padre Pio. All are very welcome for these prayerful celebrations.

NCBI SLIGO are hosting a coffee morning on Thursday 22nd September from 10am to 12noon to raise awareness about AMD (Age related Macular Degeneration). Call in, meet our friendly staff at our shop on Harmony Hill.

POSITIVE PARENTING– SLIGO Positive parenting with psychologist Shane Martin in Summerhill College Thursday 22nd September at 7pm.

ST. MICHAEL'S FAMILY LIFE CENTRE Fundraising FLAG DAY next Friday 23rd September. Help raise urgently needed funds. Collectors needed during the day. Please help. Tel / Txt Oliver at 087 2805555, Tel 071 9170329 or email: stmichaelsfamilylifecentre@eircom.net

THE NATIONAL CELL SEMINAR, St. John the Evangelist Parish, Ballinteer. *Living the Joy of the Gospel*. 23rd–25th September. Keynote Speaker: Dr. Tony Hanna.

LISSADELL CHURCH Presents 'A Night of Country & Gospel' with singer James Kilbane in concert on Saturday, 24th September @ 8pm. Tickets €15 from Drumcliffe

Teahouse, Grange Pharmacy, Veritas Sligo or by calling Heather 087 1655880.

HEART SUPPORT GROUP meeting will be held in Sligo Park Hotel on Wednesday, 28th September at 7.00p.m. Speaker: Ms. Orla Barry, Manager in Citizen's Advice Centre. Topic: Schemes and Services available for older people.

CONFIRMATION YOUTH FEST will take place in Boyle on Saturday 15th October. See www.elphindiocese.ie/youthfest for more information.

SLIGO PARISHES CLUSTER PILGRIMAGE TO ROME 2016 28th October to 2nd November. Group leader: Fr. Michael Duignan. Exploring many wonders of Rome and crossing the threshold of the Holy Door of St Peter's in this Jubilee of Mercy. Cost €680 pp incl. flights, B&B, taxis and transfers. To book please contact Colette Furlong on 087 6132985.

CATHEDRAL of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Upcoming EVENTS THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday 19th **Meeting for Parents of First Holy Communion children** in Gillooly Hall at 8pm
Weds. 21st **Wednesday Tea'** Upstairs in Cathedral Sacristy immediately after 10.30a.m. Mass
Saturday 24th **Confessions** 2.00p.m. - 4.00p.m.

Anniversary & remembrances



DAY	8.00 A.M.	10.30 A.M.
MON 19 th	DERRIG FINN & Deceased Sweeney family members	First Anniversary PATRICIA MCMANUS ✠
TUES 20 th	—	PHIL MCQUAID
WED 21 st	ELLEN MARY MORAN	—
THURS 22 nd	—	NEIL & MARY HERRON
FRI 23 rd	EDDIE O'REILLY	—
SAT 24 th	—	Month's Mind ANNA KELLY ✠