

The Third Sunday of Lent

We have **completed two whole weeks of Lent**. It might be helpful to assess our Lenten progress in the three Lenten practices: **prayer, fasting and almsgiving**. Our Lord advises that these are conducted in secrecy. However, some practices are more visible than others. Our celebrations of Mass have been very prayerful and liturgically beautiful as we have tried to offer our best to the Lord in wholehearted worship and praise. **Thank you to school** for organising weekday Masses and encouraging children to attend. The example of teachers can be very encouraging in this regard. Continued encouragement is given to families of children preparing for Sacraments to attend Sunday Mass. The time is fast running out before the First Holy Communions. We do our children a disservice if we do not assist their spiritual growth by familiarising them with the life of our parish. There is the possibility that we increasingly become a religion of expensive events such as Baptism or First Communion or Confirmation rather than a religion of faithful commitment and ongoing practice. Let us not allow these opportunities run away from us. Next Sunday is **Laetare Sunday**. Throughout the Diocese we are asked to take up our **Lenten Almsgiving collection in support of SCIAF**. The parish is always generous in this regard.

A meeting of the **Social Group** will take place in the hall on **Thursday April 04th at 7.00 pm**. The forthcoming 40th Anniversary celebrations of Fr Kevin Ryan will be the topic for discussion. **Parishioners who wish to help are warmly invited to attend the meeting as well**. We look forward to welcoming Fr Kevin to his home parish. He will be celebrating both the weekend Masses.

During the **last two weekends** we have included three suggestions to be carried out. Here are another three: **Firstly**, continue to pray the penitential rite at Mass with great prayerfulness. This is a penitential season. **Secondly**, collect an order of service from the back of the church so that we can all join in the eucharistic prayer. **Thirdly**, pay a visit to the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in preparation for the Feast of the Annunciation. Say a prayer for our families beside the altar.

Over the last weeks we have presented a **Lenten Catechesis** to enrich our understanding of the season and prepare us for Holy Week. Last week we mentioned that the **Fourth Sunday** in Lent is referred to as **Laetare Sunday, Rejoicing Sunday**. It is also **Mothers' Day**. The **Fifth Sunday** in **Lent** might be described as the **First Sunday in Passiontide**. The liturgy begins to direct us more and more towards the Passion and Death of our Lord. On this Sunday many parishes cover up their statues and crucifixes with purple emphasising the sense of tragedy that is about to be experienced by Jesus. Time passes very quickly. Every encouragement is given to parishioners to **prepare ourselves for Holy Week** and the celebration of the most important week of the year particularly those three days referred to as the **Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday**. These days are the high point of the faith. We are encouraged to be with our Lord as he is ground under the wheel of history.

Monday the 25th March is another **Solemnity** in the calendar of the Church. It is the feast of the **Annunciation of our Lord**, the celebration of the **Incarnation** (God becoming a man in space and in time). The term **Lady Day** is often given to this day as well. The Annunciation is listed among the eight major feast days of the Lord and the four major feast days of Our Lady. It is only nine months to Christmas Day!! The feast can be traced back as early as the fourth century though the first certain mention was at the Council of Toledo in 692. Traditionally Catholics celebrate three important beliefs on the feast: the great mystery of the **Incarnation** in salvation history, the role of **Mary** in God's plan of salvation, the emphasis in **Catholic social teaching** of the dignity of the human person from the moment of conception. Jesus became man from the moment he was conceived in his mother's womb not simply from the moment he left his mother's womb.

Attendance: 287, Collection: £679

Collection for the Sick and Retired Clergy: £400

Thank you to the parish for this generosity.

Anniversary of: James McManus, Bobby Mitchell, James Burns, Hugh McAree, James Houston (Snr.), Catherine McCardie, Joseph Nugent, Peter Woods,

Stations of the Cross

Over the last couple of weeks we have tried to focus our attention on the tragic journey of Jesus to the place of his execution. We have tried to imagine what it must have been like, however our imaginations cannot describe the reality of that dreadful journey.

The Seventh Station:

Jesus falls the second time. With the weight of the Cross bearing down on him it is hardly surprising that Jesus stumbled and fell. Let us remember that he is becoming more and more exhausted and more terrified. He still has a long way to go.

The Eighth Station:

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem. These women tried to give him a little comfort as he struggled along. It is a blessing to help anyone in any type of need.

On a hill far away stood an old rugged Cross, the emblem of suffering and shame and I loved that old Cross where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain.

*Response to the Psalm:
Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we
have sinned.*



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Weekly Schedule	Time	Intention
Sunday 24th March <i>Third Sunday of Lent</i>	10:00am 4:00pm	James Houston (Snr.) Stations of the Cross
Monday 25th March <i>Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord</i>	9:05am 9:30am 1:30pm	Prayers Before The Cross James Burns and Hugh McAree Mass at Carstairs
Tues 26th March <i>Lenten Week Day</i>	8:15am 9:00am 9:30am	Mass in School Stations of the Cross Catherine McCardie
Wed 27th March <i>Lenten Week Day</i>	8:15am 9:05am 9:30am	Mass in School Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Peter Woods
Thurs 28th March <i>Lenten Week Day</i>	8:15am 9:05am 9:30am 7:00pm	Mass in School Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Bobby Mitchell Lenten Quiet Time with the Blessed Sacrament
Friday 29th March <i>Lenten Week Day</i>	9:00am 9:30am	Stations of the Cross James McManus
Saturday 30th March	4:00pm 4:30pm	Holy Rosary Josphe Nugent

	Readers	Eucharistic Ministers
Saturday 30th Mar.	J Burns	M Connor, C Dabernig, C Morrissey
Sunday 31st Mar.	Children's Liturgy	M Green, J Mullen, P Cullion

