

**Catechesis on prayer with the Sacred Scripture**

*Continuing from last week the catechesis (teaching) by Pope Francis on 'prayer with the sacred scripture'*

The Bible was not written for a generic humanity, but for us, for me, for you, for men and women in flesh and blood, men and women who have a name and a surname, like me, like you. And when the Word of God, infused with the Holy Spirit, is received with an open heart, it does not leave things as they were before: never. Something changes. And this is the grace and the power of the Word of God.

Christian tradition is rich in experiences and reflections on prayer with the Sacred Scripture. In particular, the method of "Lectio divina" was established; it originated in monastic circles, but is now also practised by Christians who frequent their parishes. It is first of all a matter of reading the biblical passage attentively: even more, I would say with "obedience" to the text, to understand what it means in and of itself. One then enters into dialogue with Scripture, so that those words become a cause for meditation and prayer: while remaining faithful to the text, I begin to ask myself what it "says to me". This is a delicate step: we must not slip into subjective interpretations, but rather become part of the living Tradition, which unites each of us to Sacred Scripture.

The last step of Lectio divina is contemplation. Words and thoughts here give way to love, as between lovers for whom sometimes it is enough to just look at each other in silence. The biblical text remains, but like a mirror, like an icon to be contemplated. And in this way, there is dialogue.

Through prayer, the Word of God comes to abide in us and we abide in it. The Word inspires good intentions and sustains action; it gives us strength and serenity, and even when it challenges us, it gives us peace. On "bad" and confusing days, it guarantees to the heart a core of confidence and of love that protects it from the attacks of the evil one. In this way the Word of God is made flesh — allow me to use this expression: made flesh — in those who receive it in prayer.

The intuition emerges in some ancient texts that Christians identify so completely with the Word that, even if all the Bibles in the world were to be burned, its "mould" could still be saved through the imprint it left on the life of the saints. This is a beautiful expression. Christian life is at the same time a work of obedience and of creativity.

Good Christians must be obedient, but they must be creative. Obedient, because they listen to the Word of God; creative, because they have the Holy Spirit within who drives them to be so, to lead them forward. At the end of one of his discourses addressed in the form of parables, Jesus makes this comparison: "Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure" — the heart — "what is new and what is old" (Mt. 13:52). The Holy Scriptures are an inexhaustible treasure. May the Lord grant us all to draw ever more from them, through prayer. Thank you.

**Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking**

**February 8<sup>th</sup>** is *International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking*, first observed in 2015 and on the memorial of St. Josephine Bakhita. Each year, around 2.5 million people are victims of trafficking and slavery. For those engaged in trafficking it has become one of the most lucrative illegal activities in the world. Through the Day of Prayer, we reflect on the experience of those who have suffered but also we are called to reach out to victims and survivors.

**St Josephine Bakhita** 1868-1947, a native of Sudan, brought as a slave to Italy where she became a Christian and later entered the Institute of Canossian Daughters of Charity in Venice.



**Lourdes 2024**

It's been a while since the Parish organised a pilgrimage. Would there be an interest in a Parish Pilgrimage to Lourdes this year? I would envisage us joining with the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes which will travel from Sept 5th to 10th. If so please ring Jean in the Parish Office or speak to one of the sacristans with your expression of interest.

**St Brigid's Cross Workshop**

There was great activity, fun and excitement in the Pastoral Centre last Sunday as a workshop was held on 'how to make' a St Brigid's Cross. There were many instructors, especially Dolores O'Leary, Mary Kelly and Nora Carthy. A big 'Thank You' to Mary Tighe who is the driving force behind this and who sourced the rushes in the bogs of Ofally and in Blessington.

**Confirmation Retreats**

These are now finished, and they went very well. The boys and girls enjoyed them and the time that they had just to focus on the fact that they are to be confirmed. Again a big thank you to the Team - Pat Cummins; Margaret Hill, Aine Jordan and Deacon Michael O'Connor.

**Family Mass**

Thank you so much to the Team and the Youth Choir for last weekend's Family Mass. Our next Family Mass is on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February at 10.30am.

**First Penance**

The celebration of First Penance/Confession continues for the boys and girls in the Holy Communion classes. On Thursday 8th we welcome Scoil Bhríde Buachaillí.

**Intercessions for Vocations**

Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time - In our Gospel, we see how Jesus makes it a priority to find a quiet place where he can pray. We pray that those who are called by God to serve as a priest, deacon or religious, may be people of prayer — and always find time in their day to dedicate to prayer.

**Hospitality Team**

Thank you for assisting Team after the 10.30am Family Mass and for providing refreshments after the 12 noon Mass. It was a very busy weekend with all the St Brigid's Cross making.

**Love is in the air!**

As we approach St Valentine's Day on 14<sup>th</sup> February there will be a blessing at our Masses next weekend 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> February for couples who are engaged AND couples who are married. It will be simple enough — a Prayer of Blessing after the distribution of Holy Communion and before the Final Prayer of the Mass.

**Chroi Mhaire Foodbank**

We thank you for your continuing support to our food basket. Donations gratefully received as they deliver to over 75 households in D15.

*Fr Michael Carey PP*



**Children's Corner: In the Gospel Today**

Simon Peter's mother-in-law is sick, but Jesus makes her better. People hear that Jesus can heal those who are sick. Lots and lots of people all come to find Jesus so that he can make them well. There are so many people that Jesus gets very tired. He goes away by himself to be quiet and pray.



Jesus, you had hands that reached out and healed people. Help me to reach out to others too. Help me to use my hands for good, to bring love and kindness into the world. Amen.

**Imagine...**

It can be nice to go somewhere different in our imaginations. Imagine you are somewhere peaceful and beautiful. Draw your special place in the thought bubble.

**LOVE IS THE ANSWER!**

Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall Fingal County Council



A CELEBRATION of SPRING FOR ALL THE FINGAL FAMILY

**An Evening Concert celebrating St. Brigid**

Monday 5th February 7pm (Doors 6:30pm)

St. Brigid's Parish Blanchardstown, Church Ave, Blanchardstown, Dublin  
 Tickets €5 (Booking available via Eventbrite)



**Parish Meeting – This week**

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February  
 The Communications Group will meet at 7.30pm in the Pastoral Centre.

**St. Vincent de Paul**

The outdoor monthly collection for St. Brigid's Blanchardstown, VdP, will be taken up next weekend at all Masses.



**MISSIO IRELAND** Thank you for your kindness in donating €1140 on World Mission Sunday. This generous gift will go directly towards supporting missionary work in the developing world.

We pray for our recently deceased; Sean O'Donovan Michael O'Loughlin Always loved, never forgotten



**STATIONS of the CROSS**

Stations of the Cross start on Friday 16th February at 9.30am before mass. They will continue each Friday at 9.30am during Lent. This is a lovely way to begin Lent.

**Mass intentions for the week**

Sat	Niko Arra (MM) Frances Kennedy (1st Anniv)
Sun	Veronica Gallagher (1st Anniv) Johnny & John Lundy John Horton
Mon	Una (Patricia) Nulty—1st Anniv
Tue	Harry McCarthy
Thurs	Ken Devitt

**Bank Holiday**  
 Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February is St Brigid's Day Bank Holiday. Mass be at 11.00am.  
**There is no 7.30pm Mass.**

**MEDJUGORJE 2024 MARIAN PILGRIMAGE**  
 15th May 2024— 7 nights  
 €750pps. Contact Pat 087 223 8911 or Marian Pilgrimages